

S P E C I E S T R A I T O R I S S U E 3

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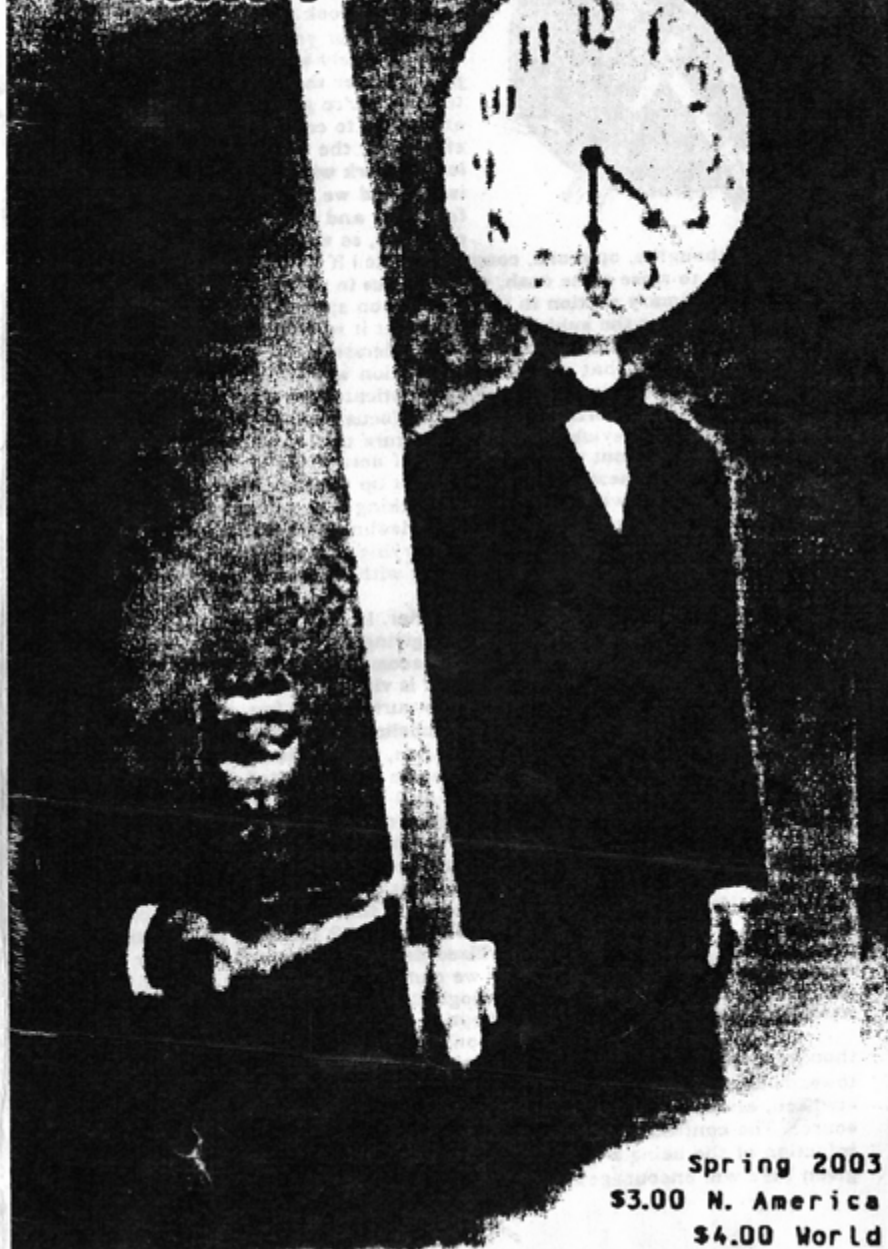
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Species Traitor and this summers
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Species Traitor

An insurrectionary anarchist-primitive journal

issue 3



Spring 2003
\$3.00 N. America
\$4.00 World

Species Traitor 3

Uploaded for the green anarchist archive www.green-anarchy.wikidot.com.

Please visit site for PDF versions of ST 2 and 4, as well as writings by some of the writers included in this zine.

Contact blackandgreenpress@gmail.com for physical copies of ST.



W

elcome to issue 3 of Species

Traitor. We were hoping to have this issue as a book sized zine and to formalize our yearly 'schedule'. Unfortunately we haven't been able to pull together the necessary funding in time, so we're getting this issue out now and going to continue fund raising efforts for the next issue. So we've got lots to work with for the next couple issues and we hope to get more feedback and contributions from everyone, so write us with your

comments, thoughts, opinions, complaints, etc. If you have any ingenious ideas on how to raise some cash, please let us in on them.

The primary section in this issue is on symbolic culture. We feel very strongly about the subject and feel that it remains a kind of academic or fringe obscurity while it is central to understanding the existence of civilization. It seems that any act of liberation will require a turn on this totalistic world view that we've been domesticated to.

Despite the enormous efforts and focus of anarchists like John Zerzan, a critique of symbolic thought/culture tends to get shoved to the side when talking about practical means of destroying civilization and reconnecting to wildness. When we brought up the idea of doing a focus on symbolic culture, we were criticized for picking a 'timeless' and 'academic' philosophy that had no direct relation to dealing with the problems we face. Obviously we feel the opposite. How can trying to understand and revolt against the way we (the civilized) interact with the world be considered unimportant?

The topic really couldn't be timelier. In this time of State conflicts and seeing how Bush could very well be giving civilization a final shove (albeit on a potentially nuclear level) it becomes all the more important to question what the protagonist may be. It is vital to realize that every bit of propaganda that comes out (and my how surreal that has gotten...) is nothing but a complete show of how symbolic culture functions. While capitalism is the current face of civilization, the spectacle is the current face of symbolic culture. We have the media (consolidated spectacle) contorting the way we deal with others and trivializing our existence and people eat it up as long as we are preoccupied with 'material comforts'.

We are at a crossroads where the people of 'first world' nations have neither a reason to live or die, but are so completely involved in a way of survival that is literally killing the planet that they will hold on until the last bit of life has been destroyed. What is it that they are holding on to and how is it that anything can be done about it? Too long have leftists been focusing on reforming the civilized dream, the options are clear now: we can either die with the beast or we can get rid of it once and for all. Civilization is at the peak of technological control, but it is also at its weakest because it is running on emptiness, spiritually and literally.

Our goal here is to draw upon a critique of the totality of civilized thought, symbolic culture, as a pivotal part of our relations and movement towards liberation. The focus here is to expose all the underlying aspects of civilized, and even most 'revolutionary', perception and question at the source. The continued existence of civilization carries on through an infection of the being from cradle to grave (literally). We hope the critiques given here will encourage others to work with these concepts and social

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Issue #11 the unofficial fuck science issue.

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- Patriarchal Conquest and Industrial Civilization
- Consumption of Domestication
- Not My Vision of Liberation
- Science, Civilization's Ally
- Direct action news



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of Leveling' and poetry emphasising cultural challenges to the Totality.

John played a big role in the Anarchist Research Group throughout the 1980s and also founded the Anarcho-Primitivist Network following the 1991 Anarchy in the UK festival in London, publishing the 'Primitivist Primer', an instant classic still in wide circulation today. APN counted editors of 'Do Or Die' and 'Green Anarchists' amongst its enthusiastic participants, and so was influential in the 'green wave' of eco-radicalism that characterised the mid-1990s. John's contacts ranged through Lorraine Perlman to the editors of 'Freedom', dealing with each with good humour and principle.

John was erudite, generous and brave. He left us all too early and with much still to say, and has already received tributes from the likes of John Zerzan, the 'Black Badger' and the editors of 'Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed'. He leaves his widow and co-worker, Leigh Starcross, and will be much missed.

John Connor



JULY 10-13 SUSQUEHANNA PENNSYLVANIA

BLACK AND GREEN NETWORK WILL BE HOSTING A GREEN ANARCHIST GATHERING THIS SUMMER IN NORTH CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA. THE FOCUS OF THE GATHERING IS TO EXPAND ON GREEN ANARCHIST CRITIQUE AND ACTION WITH AN EMPHASIS ON WILDERNESS SKILLS.

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relations. To destroy civilization, we must seek it out in its totality. We hope this issue will be another step towards total liberation.

The accompanying essays are ones that we would like to draw attention to; ones that we feel are generally overlooked in the anarchist milieu. This isn't to say that the writers are ones that we would stand behind uncritically, but we feel their work is an important contribution. We should be free to use the work of others and we should remain critical of everything. We were hoping to include a listing of other important and overlooked works, but are not able to due to space limitations. However, a book list has been started online and we encourage anyone to check it out and add titles. The list is at: <http://www.blackandgreen.org/biblio.html>

The other sections in this issue are ones we hope will remain constants and that all you folks reading this will contribute to. Those are: revolution and insurrection and explorations of anarchy and anthropology/archaeology. We feel that there is much talk about ideas of destroying civilization, but much of the debate has been in the terms of those seeking to seize state power, whereas we feel liberation will only come through the abolition of power. This section is a starting point to opening up practical ideas of bringing this about.

The 'exploration' section opens questions about the 'sacred cow' of anthropology. We realize that the anarcho-primitivist critique of civilization is generally considered dependent upon this field. We realize that anthropology is a science, and therefore shaped by the problems that come with it. This section began with the essay 'anarcho-primitivism beyond anthropology and archaeology' from Species Traitor number 2, and with an interview with anarcho-primitivist archaeologist Theresa Kintz and some more about the limits and uses of anthropology.

We have gotten a lot of criticism that the past two issues of S.T. have been more 'academic' and harder for some people to read. We hope that this issue will be more accessible while we have in no way made this a limit to the contents. For the purpose of clarity we have included some working definitions below that will help to contextualize what is being talked about throughout this issue.

However, if you feel that what is being said is 'too much' for people to deal with then we encourage you to try and take these ideas and break them down further. It is entirely unrealistic to think that something can or should be 'universally applicable' and so we would hope that people work with the ideas and actualities rather than write them off as 'academic' (for whatever reasons).

We are also fed up with those who have written off green anarchists and anarcho-primitivists as misanthropes. The essence of being against civilization is entirely pro-human. To be against civilization makes a very clear statement that goes against one of the primary principles of civilization (be it fascistic, democratic, communist, capitalist, feudal, etc.), that is that humans aren't inherently 'evil.' As anarchists we oppose all moral understandings, but we feel that the issue goes beyond this. The idea of the 'inherently evil human' has been a justification for state power (we have prisons to lock up the bad seeds, cops keep order, organization keeps things 'running'), but state power has only meant the enslavement and exploitation of all life to some obscure order.

The flow of life is chaotic, and through this chaos humans become full beings. We are, by ecology and evolution, gatherer-hunters, animals of the Pleistocene. This way of life is anti-authoritarian by every essence of its being. The human lineage goes back 6 million years and homo sapien sapiens are said to have existed for up to 200,000 years ago. Prior to 13,000 years ago, all humans lived as gatherer-hunters in bands. It seems this enough would be evidence that if there was no institutionalized power

structure that we are perfectly capable of existing freely. In fact, this way of life has been the only true anarchist societies to exist.

What we learn from this is that humans are not inherently prone to evil. We have absolute faith in humans as animals, but we are critical of power in any level. The creation of civilization is the origins of power, and its history is only showing how it functions. What we've learned from this is that liberation comes only through the complete abolition of power, and any society that only reforms it will be doomed to the same failure.

And with this we hope that this issue will open new questions and push more towards the source of our problems instead of carrying on this kind of topical therapy that 'radical movements' have been pursuing. We encourage any and all opinions be voiced and anyone should contribute to future issues. We have lots of other new sections that we would like to make permanent additions to S.T., but had to cut down for the limited space we have to deal with here. So these are topics/sections that we are going to focus on for future issues; Health and Modernization, Agriculture and Domestication, Collapse, More on Resistance and Sciences, Radical Kids Corner, Future Primitive Skills, Technology, Religion, and 'Nature', and Spirituality and Anarchy.

Our interests here are not in providing any 'answers' or 'solutions' only in opening up questions and making suggestions so that we can give that final shove. The Earth has been crying out and we may be stepping into the final hour of civilization. Let's get serious.

Working Definitions (all quotations out of Webster's Dictionary);

Civilization: "1. An advanced stage of development in the arts and sciences accompanied by corresponding political, social, and cultural complexity. 2. The act of process of civilizing or of reaching a civilized state. 3. Informal. Modern society with its conveniences." The combination of hyper-specialization, division of labor, concentration of power and alienation that has materialized over the last 10,000 years to become the dominant social form. Society defined by systematic stratification, hierarchies, institutionalized power and corresponding political, social, economic, technological, and cultural complexity.

Symbolic Thought: Thinking in terms of abstract symbols, i.e., using language or art to qualify and quantify thoughts and interactions. An alienating method of relating experiences and thoughts to others by using intangibles or things that have no direct connection.

Symbolic Culture: A culturally adapted method of dealing with experiences through abstracts. For example, a common, institutionalized language that is detached from individual experiences. Symbolic culture is manifested when various forms of symbolic thought become a universal and act as an independent way of interacting with the world, the combination of symbols themselves become autonomous.

Domestication: "To introduce and accustom (an animal or plant) to live in a human environment and be of use to human beings. To accustom to domestic life. To adopt for domestic use." The process of making individuals dependent upon a certain way of life by coercion.

Reification: "To regard or treat (an abstraction) as if it had concrete or material existence." This is the process of turning life and the world around and of us into 'things'. Literally means 'thing-ification'.

Technology: "1. A. The application of science esp. to industrial or commercial objectives. B. The whole body of methods and materials used to achieve such objectives. 2. The body of knowledge available to a civilization that is of use in fashioning implements, practicing manual arts and skills, and extracting or collecting materials." Technology is in no way 'neutral' and neither are its 'tools'. Technology is a totalistic system, carrying its

Susan Griffin, ex-Direct Action member Brent Taylor, bit from Robert Lawlor's classic *Voices from the First Day*, 'Beyond the Consumption of Domestication' and lots more. Short, worthy reprints from other green anarchist zines, lots of poems, extensive coverage of resistance. A highlight is the interview with Sioux writer Vine Deloria, Jr by Derrick Jensen, 'Where the Buffalo Go'. The interview highlights some of the issues Deloria raised in his semi-damnation of archaeology, *Red Earth, White Lies*. We were hoping to have something like this as a part of the anarchy and anthropology section of this issue of S.T., but were held by space and time. This interview serves as a great companion to this section. However, we feel that it's important to read it with an understanding of the native land claims issues that may have implications for the way Deloria picks and chooses his science instead of disregarding the whole thing. The whole issue raises important questions, and ones that we have no answers for. This issue is at a 5,000 print run making it one of the largest anarchist publications in print.

Wilderness Way Vol. 8 #4 \$4.50 from PO Box 621 Bellaire, TX 77402.
<http://www.wmag.org>

Wilderness Way is a mainstream quarterly publication, although I've found that it has some of the most useful information for primitive skills of any other publication like it. The most recent issue has simple ways of making clothes to blood trailing to making fire from ice. Every issue has a lot of useful articles from tips for foraging, building shelters, making weapons, and more. It's definitely worth checking out, and it's widely available, which has its benefits...

Please note prices are for U.S.A, please add extra to cover postage if ordering from other countries.

John Moore
1957-2002

Formative British anti-Civilisation theorist and poet John Moore collapsed on his way to work as a lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of Luton last 30th October 2002.

Originally writing from an autonomist perspective, John was heavily influenced by anarcho-primitivist Fredy Perlman, particularly his early-1980s mythopoeia classic *'Against His-Story, Against Leviathan'*. John's key pamphlets *'Anarchy & Ecstasy'* and *'Love Bite'* challenged boundary distinctions in almost every respect, certainly concerning authorial authority. These pamphlets employment of myth to this end was widely misunderstood, particularly by willfully literal-minded reviewers at '5th Estate', which led John to even more determined attempts to subvert the authoritative voice through *The Book*

ga lit out there. The zine starts out with info on how to process and eat road kill with instructions on methods of tanning the hide. The bulk is various common species of flora and other 'weeds'. Get this and be ready for some damn good wild eatin'. While it has its faults, but overall all it's a great introductory issue and I look forward to seeing more.

Fifth Estate, recent issues \$3 from PO Box 201016 Ferndale, MI 48220.

When a good zine is done, its contributions are realized and people move on to expand on where it left off. Sometimes it's sad to see them go, but nothing is worse than when they just continue a downward spiral. Unfortunately, *FE* didn't die off, it just got worse. The latest issues since the Tennessee folks took over have been so pathetic that just having them lie around gets to my nerves. *Occasionally*, a decent article slips past, but there's hardly anything worth keeping here. #358 was definitely hitting bottom with a self-congratulating kind of pacifist cheerleading that predominated the entire issue, topped off with the worst review I've ever seen of *Green Anarchy*, but I guess it's hard to review something when you've clearly never read it or even *tried* to understand what's being said. The most recent issue, #359, is slightly better, focusing on spirituality, but I couldn't find anything of worth. When the best article is from Peter Lamborn Wilson, you know there are problems. Plenty of CrimethInc. cheerleading, too bad one CI is bad enough. *FE*, please just let it go!

Green Anarchist #67/Autumn 2002. \$2/E1 from BCM 1715, London WC1N 3XX UK. <http://www.greenanarchist.org>

'The original and the best' at it again with a focus on 'Anarchy - Grey or Green?' Covering the problems of the 'rights racketeers', abundance and scarcity, environmental racism, and more. Has Bob Blacks' hilarious juxtapose of Bookchin arrogance against an admiration of Perlman's boastful character and importance during the revolts of Paris 1968. Also, contains one of the final poems of the recently deceased anarcho-primitivist John Moore, lengthy review of *Empire* by Rob Los Ricos, bit on CrimethInc. and more. Unfortunately the printing is really light making some pages hard to read, but it's worth the bit of eye strain.

Green Anarchy #11/Winter 2003. \$3 from PO Box 11331 Eugene, OR 97440 USA or CAC distro. <http://www.greenanarchy.org>

The unofficial "fuck science" issue! A bit smaller in size, but no lack as far as the contents go. Opens with Ran Prieur's 'Science, Civilization's Ally!' and continuing with bits from

own values and motivations, a system through which individual technologies are manufactured.

Ideology: "The body of ideas reflecting the social needs and aspirations of an individual, group, class, or culture." A complete system of thought with critique, values, and plan of action that becomes something taken in instead of taking into account individual autonomy and self-determination. It remains an abstraction and only serves to subjugate the individual to some higher order.

These definitions are working, meaning they are fluid and unfixed: we have little interest in carrying on semantic debates over them. They are for practical reasons only! The writing here takes liberties with contexts. If an uncommon word is capitalized, it is done intentionally to draw on underlying concepts within symbolic culture. The word being refers to the full human-animal and relations refers to the way we deal with the world we are a part of.





Running on Emptiness The Failure of Symbolic Thought by John Zerzan

[From the book of the same
name, see reviews]

To what degree can it be said that we are really living? As the substance of culture seems to shrivel and offer less balm to troubled lives, we are led to look more deeply at our barren times. And to the place of culture itself in all this.

An anguished Ted
Sloan asks (1996), "What is

the problem with modernity? Why do modern societies have such a hard time producing adults capable of intimacy, work, enjoyment, and ethical living? Why is it that signs of damaged life are so prevalent?" According to David Morris (1994), "Chronic pain and depression, often linked and occasionally even regarded as a single disorder, constitute an immense crisis at the center of postmodern life." We have cyberspace and virtual reality, instant computerized communication in the global village; and yet have we ever felt so impoverished and isolated?

Just as Freud predicted that the fullness of civilization would mean universal neurotic unhappiness, anti-civilization currents are growing in response to the psychic immiseration that envelops us. Thus symbolic life, essence of civilization, now comes under fire.

It may still be said that this most familiar, if artificial, element is the least understood, but felt necessity drives critique, and many of us feel driven to get to the bottom of a steadily worsening mode of existence. Out of a sense of being trapped and limited by symbols comes the thesis that the extent to which thought and emotion are tied to symbolism is the measure by which absence fills the inner world and destroys the outer world.

We seem to have experienced a fall into representation, whose depths and consequences are only now being fully plumbed. In a fundamental sort of falsification, symbols at first mediated reality and then replaced it. At present we live within symbols to a greater degree than we do within our bodily selves or directly with each other.

The more involved this internal representational system is, the more distanced we are from the reality around us. Other connections, other cognitive perspectives are inhibited, to say the least, as symbolic communication and its myriad representational devices have accomplished an alienation from and betrayal of reality.

This coming between and concomitant distortion and distancing is ideological in a primary and original sense; every subsequent ideology is an echo of this one. Debord depicted contemporary society as exerting a ban on living in favor of its representation: images now in the saddle, riding life. But this is anything but a new problem. There is an imperialism or expansionism of culture from the beginning. And how much does it conquer? Philosophy today says that it is language that thinks and talks. But how much has this always been the case? Symbolizing is linear, successive, substitutive; it cannot be open to its whole object simultaneously. Its instrumental reason is just that: manipulative and seeking dominance. Its approach is "let a stand for b" instead of "let a be b." Language has its basis in the effort to conceptualize and equalize the unequal, thus bypassing the essence and diversity of a varied,

already, so CI is revolutionary, uh huh.

Final point, the CI coffers pulled up whatever it took for over 30,000 copies of the color zine, *Fighting for our Lives* which basically suffers from all the same problems mentioned above. The zine starts out by demeaning 'anarchy' to be anything that is 'rebellious'. Don't really see what the point of this is. If we make everyone anarchists already, then I guess we've achieved anarchy? Don't follow this one at all. No shortage of empty rhetoric and all that.

Destroying Barriers #1. 50 cents or stamps to PO Box 127 1246
Rancho Bernardo San Diego, CA 92128 USA.

Will be out by the time this is out. Taking over for *Green Journal* with critiques of capitalist culture. More short pieces from RM, John Zerzan and poems from Kevin Tucker. Carrying on the 'No Gods, No Masters'.

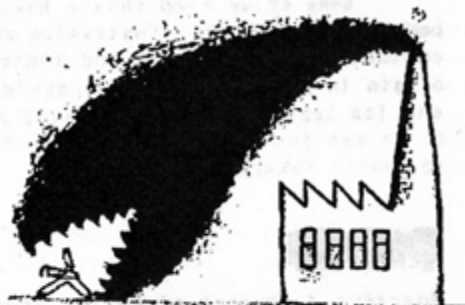
Disorderly Conduct #6/Winter-spring 2003. \$4.00 from PO Box
11331 Eugene, OR 97440 USA or CAC distra.

The newest zine from the 'Bring on the Ruckus' Society and the best yet. The size and scope of this zine is pushing it back to only 2 issues per year, yet this issue is well over 100 pages. There's more to cover in this issue than we would have space for, a few of the many highlights include; 'Burning Bridges into the New Millennium', 'Why Civilization?', 'Not My Vision of Liberation', excerpts from Susan Griffin's *Woman and Nature*, dead cop jokes, and plenty more. The writing in this issue is great and wide ranging. The sense of this issue is seriousness and a love of life which genuinely seeks 'the destruction of civilization and the reconnection to life'. The opening essays make the vital realization that perhaps we aren't all fighting for the same thing, and maybe we should be more concerned with being dead serious instead of trying to appeal to liberals, a much welcomed realization. This zine excerpts from the best of underground press and is a great overview of what's going on in the world of revolt (not to forget a huge list of revolts). Sister publication of *Species Traitor*.

Feral Forager #1. \$3.00 from PO Box 1485 Asheville, NC 28802.

The folks down in NC bring us this 'guide to living off nature's bounty in urban, rural and wilderness areas'. This is a zine for the serious future primitive, giving a few overviews about the importance of foraging and survival skills, and then going in depth with it. Green anarchist publications tend to lack in this necessary kind of skill sections, so a zine like this should be read as a companion to all the other

news for you kids, you're all still part of the civilized men-ace, and ya know what, you've offered nothing other than self-righteous bullshit over those who actually have no other option but to be poor. Get fucking real.



This brings us right up to the CI poster, 'Point Your Guns in the Right Direction'. The text says: "We've published stuff about some ways people from the more privileged classes can survive without working, but I always thought the idea was to use that liberated space to wage war for everyone's liberation. Revolution has to happen, somehow, and to have time to work on it, some of us will have to get our lives out of the work economy." This one prolific CI-er, prophesying perhaps will mailing out some bad punk records or DIY zine, just said that they're working to 'liberate' the 'privileged' from work so that they can plan the revolution. Hmmm...is this not right in everyone face? Get the rich out of work so they can plan the revolution, how novel. Sorry, but a war has been going on for 10,000 years here, and I'm not holding out for another yuppie (CI?) to figure my shit out for me. Anarchy is about *autonomy* which can only happen from self realization. Liberation will not be massified.

It continues: "It seems to me that we actually have a symbiotic relationship with the class war anarchists. Their diatribes can serve to bring the same things we're talking about down to earth..." So, CI is propaganda put out for the class war folks to make sense of, very post-modern, very pointless. I seem to remember the last great co-optation of worker rage, the Situationists. Unfortunately, their beautiful propaganda didn't amount to much for the workers who were striking. Didn't work the first time, don't think it'll work this time. There's been plenty of time since the Situationists for these folks to realize that class war isn't really helping anything, but whose surprised that CI reveals they have nothing to add.

Hunter/Gatherer, another affirmation of CI's love of the ruins of civilization in so many ways. Their obsession with just 'making things' is so overwhelming that it is pretty much the byline. So this zine is pretty much CI, the artists and inventors, trying to make subtle critiques of anti-civilization anarchists. Didn't really find much of use, and I'm sure they didn't find their "million years of DIY punk" as insulting to the *real* hunter gatherers who are actually *fighting for their lives*. Moral of the story: for CI it's all anarchy

variable richness.

Symbolism is an extensive and profound empire, which reflects and makes coherent a world view, and is itself a world view based upon withdrawal from immediate and intelligible human meaning.

James Shreeve, at the end of his *Neanderthal Enigma* (1995), provides a beautiful illustration of an alternative to symbolic being. Meditating upon what an earlier, non-symbolic consciousness might have been like, he calls forth important distinctions and possibilities:

"...where the modern's gods might inhabit the land, the buffalo, or the blade of grass, the Neanderthal's spirit was the animal or the grass blade, the thing and its soul perceived as a single vital force, with no need to distinguish them with separate names. Similarly, the absence of artistic expression does not preclude the apprehension of what is artful about the world. Neanderthals did not paint their caves with the images of animals. But perhaps they had no need to distill life into representations, because its essences were already revealed to their senses. The sight of a running herd was enough to inspire a surging sense of beauty. They had no drums or bone flutes, but they could listen to the booming rhythms of the wind, the earth, and each other's heartbeats, and be transported."

Rather than celebrate the cognitive communion with the world that Shreeve suggests we once enjoyed, much less embark on the project of seeking to recover it, the use of symbols is of course widely considered the hallmark of human cognition. Goethe said, "Everything is a symbol," as industrial capitalism, milestone of mediation and alienation, took off. At about the same time Kant decided that the key to philosophy lies in the answer to the question, "What is the ground of the relation of that in us which we call 'representation' to the object?" Unfortunately, he divined for modern thought an ahistorical and fundamentally inadequate answer, namely that we are simply not constituted so as to be able to understand reality directly. Two centuries later (1981), Emmanuel Levinas came much closer to the mark with "Philosophy, in its very diachrony, is the consciousness of the breakup of consciousness."

Eli Sagan (1985) spoke for countless others in declaring that the need to symbolize and live in a symbolic world is, like aggression, a human need so basic that "it can be denied only at the cost of severe psychic disorder." The need for symbols — and violence — did not always obtain, however. Rather, they have their origins in the thwarting and fragmenting of an earlier wholeness, in the process of domestication from which civilization issued. Apparently driven forward by a gradually quickening growth in the division of labor that began to take hold in the Upper Paleolithic, culture emerged as time, language, art, number, and then agriculture.

The word culture derives from the Latin *cultura*, referring to cultivation of the soil; that is, to the domestication of plants and animals—and of ourselves in the bargain. A restless spirit of innovation and anxiety has largely been with us ever since, as continually changing symbolic modes seek to fix what cannot be redressed without rejecting the symbolic and its estranged world.

Following Durkheim, Leslie White (1949) wrote, "Human behavior is symbolic behavior; symbolic behavior is human behavior. The symbol is the universe of humanity." It is past time to see such pronouncements as ideology, serving to shore up the elemental falsification underneath a virtually all-encompassing false consciousness. But if a fully developed symbolic world is not, in Northrop Frye's bald claim (1981), in sum "the charter of our freedom," anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1965) comes closer to the truth in saying that we are generally dependent on "the guidance provided by systems of significant symbols." Closer yet is Cohen (1974), who observed that "symbols are essential for the development and maintenance of social order." The ensemble of symbols represents the social order and the individual's place in it, a formulation that always leaves the genesis of this arrangement unquestioned. How did our behavior come to be aligned by symbolization?

Culture arose and flourished via domination of nature, its growth a measure of that progressive mastery that unfolded with ever greater division of labor. Malinowski (1962) understood symbolism as the soul of civilization, chiefly in the form of language as a means of coordinating action or of standardizing technique, and providing rules for social, ritual, and industrial behavior.

It is our fall from a simplicity and fullness of life directly experienced, from the sensuous moment of knowing, which leaves a gap that the symbolic can never bridge. This is what is always being covered over by layers of cultural consolations, civilized detouring that never recovers lost wholeness. In a very deep sense, only what is repressed is symbolized, because only what is repressed needs to be symbolized. The magnitude of symbolization testifies to how much has been repressed; buried, but possibly still recoverable.

Imperceptibly for a long while, most likely, division of labor very slowly advanced and eventually began to erode the autonomy of the individual and a face-to-face mode of social existence. The virus destined to become full-blown as civilization began in this way: a tentative thesis supported by all that victimizes us now. From initial alienation to advanced civilization, the course is marked by more and more reification, dependence, bureaucratization, spiritual desolation, and barren technicization.

Little wonder that the question of the origin of symbolic thought, the very air of civilization, arises with some force. Why culture should exist in the first place appears, increasingly, a more apt way to put it. Especially given the enormous antiquity of human intelligence now established, chiefly from Thomas Wynn's persuasive demonstration (1989) of what it took to fashion the stone tools of about a million years ago. There was a very evident gap between established human capability and the initiation of symbolic culture, with many thousands of generations intervening between the two.

Culture is a fairly recent affair. The oldest cave art, for example, is in the neighborhood of 30,000 years old, and agriculture only got underway about 10,000 years ago. The missing element during the vast interval between the time when I.Q. was available to enable symbolizing, and its realization, was a shift in our relationship to nature. It seems plausible to see in this interval, on some level that we will perhaps never fathom, a refusal to strive for mastery of nature. It may be that only when this striving for mastery was introduced, probably non-consciously, via a very gradual division of labor, did the symbolizing of experiences begin to take hold.

But, it is so often argued, the violence of primitives - human sacrifice, cannibalism, head-hunting, slavery, etc. - can only be tamed by symbolic culture/civilization. The simple answer to this stereotype of the primitive is that organized violence was not ended by culture, but in fact commenced with it. William J. Perry (1927) studied various New World peoples and noted a striking contrast between an agricultural group and a non-domesticated group. He found the latter "greatly inferior in culture, but lacking [the former's] hideous customs." While virtually every society that adopted a domesticated relationship to nature, all over the globe, became subject to violent practices, the non-agricultural knew no organized violence. Anthropologists have long focused on the Northwest Coast Indians as a rare exception to this rule of thumb. Although essentially a fishing people, at a certain point they took slaves and established a very hierarchical society. Even here, however, domestication was present, in the form of tame dogs and tobacco as a minor crop.

We succumb to objectification and let a web of culture control us and tell us how to live, as if this were a natural development. It is anything but that, and we should be clear about what culture/civilization has in fact given us, and what it has taken away.

The philosopher Richard Rorty (1979) described culture as the assemblage of claims to knowledge. In the realm of symbolic being the senses are depreciated, because of their systematic separation and atrophy under civilization. The sensual is not considered a legitimate source of claims to truth.

We humans once allowed a full and appreciative reception to the total sensory input, what is called in German *umwelt*, or the world around us. Heinz Werner (1940, 1963) argued that originally a single sense obtained, before divisions in society ruptured sensory unity. Surviving non-agricultural peoples often exhibit, in the interplay and interpenetration of the senses, a very much greater sensory awareness and involvement than do domesticated

human cloning, cyborgization of the individual, etc., come to pass. All exits are closed.

Some of us find this a hideous prospect, and see Dyens' book as yet another illustration of the pathology of symbolic culture. We can question and indict this outlook, with its origin in the development of divided, hierarchical societies and its logic of ever-increasing mediation and estrangement; or we can just go along for the ride to a predictably dystopian future.

-John Zerzan

zines

Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed. #54/Winter 2002-2003. CAL Press PO Box 1446 Columbia, MO 65205-1446 USA. \$6.00 single issue, write for subscription info. <http://www.anarchymag.org>

Definitely burying the hatchet of 'organization' and 'platform' anarchism with specific essays and review by Wolfi Landstreicher, Jason McQuinn, Lawrence Jarach, and Bob Black. I think the topic is important, but I'm not sure it's worth so many similar drives. Perhaps I'm not taking their specific readership into account, and I'd hope that the anarcho-leftists will take this into heart. I admit I'm a bit disappointed to see such a collection of essays on the subject without mention of Jacques Camatte's 'On Organization'. Overall I tend to feel that *Anarchy* remains rather timeless despite its news and reviews sections, yet it is an important part for the more theoretical realms of anarchism. Also has Zerzan's 'Twilight of the Machines' plus letters section, reviews and more.

CrimethInc. PO Box 1963 Olympia, WA 98507 USA or www.crimethinc.net/ or .com

This isn't a review of any one thing in particular, just general problems. We'll start with *Evasion*, the popular zine back in book form. Don't know if anyone else picked up on the irony of the statement made by the 'anonymous' author (the notorious 'evasion author' [anonymous is identity-less, not just 'nameless']) on the CI website asking people not to make copies of the zine anymore (which makes up the bulk of the book). The zine, and presumably book, are all about scamming, hhm... I haven't read the book, but I read the zine years ago. I think the thing is sometimes funny, but honestly the writing isn't too great, and everything else about the book is a complete turn off. Let's just take the back cover, "Poverty, Homelessness, Unemployment...If you're not having fun, you're not doing it right." (I'm not positive of the exact wording) A ton of middle class white kids come to mind, all so cocky cause they just dumpstered for the first time or hopped a train. Got

us. I am eager to see what more awaits us from Derrick.

However, there is a problem with the kind of appeal that his writing brings, as was pointed out by Lawrence Jarach (review of *CoMB* in *Anarchy* #54) as well as by Ted Kaczynski: that is that Derrick has given no shortage of powerful words to a critique of civilization, but perhaps its not clear enough. As Jarach points out, liberals and lefties are just as eager to pull his words into their arguments without taking fully into account exactly what Derrick is pointing right at in his books: that is civilization itself. I've seen a lot of flexibility in his writing, and I feel that can be very positive, but I feel that his lack of explicit clarity may hollow his critique. This isn't said to discount Derricks' convictions, effort, and especially not the outcome, I just hope that his future books will convey the urgency and totality of his critique. Regardless, this is one of the best books I've ever read.

Metal and Flesh: The Evolution of Man: Technology Takes Over by Ollivier Dyens (The MIT Press, Cambridge MA, 2001) 120 pp.

The title pretty much covers it in this case of one more contribution to the repulsive joint project of postmodernism and high-tech dehumanization.

Dyens quotes Artificial Intelligence theorist Sherry Turkle, highlighting the core perspective of *Metal and Flesh*: "Our technologically enmeshed relationships oblige us to ask to what extent we ourselves have become cyborgs, transgressive mixture of biology, technology, and code. The traditional distance between people and machines has become harder to maintain" (Turkle, 1995, p. 21).

This descriptive statement, however, is not the same as endorsing the cyborg trajectory; in fact, Turkle has expressed at least some qualified questioning of an increasingly technified future and its implications.

Dyens has no such doubts. At the heart of his embrace of the techno takeover is a fundamental judgment about the end of nature. He holds to the basic postmodern tenet that there is no way to connect with nature, no point outside of or prior to symbolic culture. If that is so, we are simply, inescapably tied to the development of the symbolic, including all of its technological projects.

He expresses part of this argument as follows: "A digitized body is a cultural body. When a human being is digitized, he no longer belongs to organic reality." Along with the sexist usage, Dyens proclaims the no-way-out, all-enveloping, all-defining world of symbolic culture. From this post-modern viewpoint, there never was any "nature," because it has always been a function of the cultural. We can do nothing but accept our fate, even celebrate it, as genetic engineering,

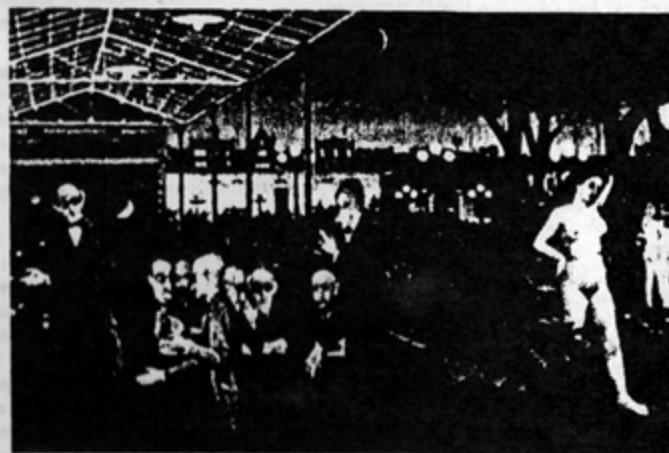
individuals (E. Carpenter 1980). Striking examples abound, such as the Bushmen, who can see four moons of Jupiter with the unaided eye and can hear a single-engine light plane seventy miles away (Farb 1978).

Symbolic culture inhibits human communication by blocking and otherwise suppressing channels of sensory awareness. An increasingly technological existence compels us to tune out most of what we could experience. The William Blake declaration comes to mind:

"If the doors of perception were cleansed, everything would appear to man as it is, infinite. For man has closed himself up, 'till he sees all things through narrow chinks of his cavern."

Laurens van der Post (1958) described telepathic communication among the Kung in Africa, prompting Richard Coan (1987) to characterize such modes as "representing an alternative, rather than a prelude to the kind of civilization in which we live."

In 1623 William Drummond wrote, "What sweet contentments doth the soul enjoy by the senses. They are the gates and windows of its knowledge, the organs of its delight." In fact, the "I," if not the "soul," doesn't exist in the absence of bodily sensations; there are no non-sensory conscious states. But it is all too evident how our senses have been domesticated in a symbolic cultural atmosphere: tamed, separated, arranged in a revealing hierarchy. Vision, under the sign of modern linear perspective, reigns because it is the least proximal, most distancing of the senses. It has been the means by which the individual has been transformed into a spectator, the world into a spectacle, and the body an object or specimen. The primacy of the visual is no accident, for an undue elevation of sight not only situates the viewer outside what he or she sees, but enables the principle of control or



domination at base. Sound or hearing as the acme of the senses would be much less adequate to domestication because it surrounds and penetrates the speaker as well as the listener.

Other sensual faculties are discounted far more. Smell, which loses its importance only when suppressed by culture, was once a vital means of connection with the world. The literature on cognition almost completely ignores the sense of smell, just as its role is now so circumscribed among humans. It is, after all, of little use for purposes of domination; considering how smell can so directly trigger even very distant memories, perhaps it is even a kind of anti-domination faculty. Lewis Thomas (1983) remarked that "The act of smelling something, anything, is remarkably like the act of thinking itself." And if it isn't it very likely used to be and should be again.

Tactile experiences or practices are another sensual area we have been expected to

relinquish in favor of compensatory symbolic substitutes. The sense of touch has indeed been diminished in a synthetic, work-occupied, long-distance existence. There is little time for or emphasis on tactile stimulation or communication, even though such deprivation causes clearly negative outcomes. Nuances of sensitivity and tenderness become lost, and it is well known that infants and children who are seldom touched, carried and caressed are slow to develop and are often emotionally stunted.

Touching by definition involves feeling; to be "touched" is to feel emotionally moved, a reminder of the earlier potency of the tactile sense, as in the expression "keep in touch." The lessening of this category of sensuousness, among the rest, has had momentous consequences. Its renewal, in a re-sensitized, reunited world, will bring a likewise momentous improvement in living. As Tommy cried out, in The Who's rock opera of the same name, "See me, feel me, touch me, heal me...."

As with animals and plants, the land, the rivers, and human emotions, the senses come to be isolated and subdued. Aristotle's notion of a "proper" plan of the universe dictated that "each sense has its proper sphere." Freud, Marcuse and others saw that civilization demands the sublimation or repression of the pleasures of the proximity senses so that the individual can be thus converted to an instrument of labor. Social control, via the network of the symbolic, very deliberately disempowers the body. An alienated counter-world, driven on to greater estrangement by ever-greater division of labor, humbles one's own somatic sensations and fundamentally distracts from the basic rhythms of one's life.

The definitive mind-body split, ascribed to Descartes' 17th century formulations, is the very hallmark of modern society. What has been referred to as the great "Cartesian anxiety" over the specter of intellectual and moral chaos, was resolved in favor of suppression of the sensual and passionate dimension of human existence. Again we see the domesticating urge underlying culture, the fear of not being in control, now indicting the senses with a vengeance. Henceforth science and technology have a theoretic license to proceed without limits, sensual knowledge having been effectively eradicated in terms of claims to truth or understanding.

Seeing what this bargain has wrought, a deep-seated reaction is dawning against the vast symbolic enterprise that weighs us down and invades every part of us. "If we do not 'come to our senses' soon," as David Howes (1991) judged, "we will have permanently forfeited the chance of constructing any meaningful alternatives to the pseudo-existence which passes for life in our current 'Civilization of the Image.'" The task of critique may be, most centrally, to help us see what it will take to reach a place in which we are truly present to each other and to the world.

The first separation seems to have been the sense of time which brings a loss of being present to ourselves. The growth of this sense is all but indistinguishable from that of alienation itself. If, as Levi-Strauss put it, "the characteristic feature of the savage mind is its timelessness," living in the here and now becomes lost through the mediation of cultural interventions. Presentness is deferred by the symbolic, and this refusal of the contingent instant is the birth of time. We fall under the spell of what Eliade called the "terror of history" as representations effectively oppose the pull of immediate perceptual experience.

Mircea Eliade's *Myth of the Eternal Return* (1954) stresses the fear that all primitive societies have had of history, the passing of time. On the other hand, voices of civilization have tried to celebrate our immersion in this most basic cultural construct. Leroi-Gourhan (1964), for instance, saw in time orientation "perhaps the human act par excellence." Our perceptions have become so time-governed and time saturated that it is hard to imagine time's general absence: for the same reasons it is so difficult to see, at this point, a non-alienated, non-symbolic, undivided social existence.

History, according to Peterson and Goodall (1993), is marked by an amnesia about where we came from. Their stimulating *Visions of Caliban* also pointed out that our great forgetting may well have begun with language, the originating device of the symbolic world. Comparative linguist Mary LeCron Foster (1978, 1980) believes that language is perhaps less than 50,000 years old and arose with the first impulses toward art, ritual and social differentiation. Verbal symbolizing is the principal means of establishing, defining, and maintaining the cultural world and of structuring our very thinking.

check this out and any leftists who still feel that civilization could (or should) be reformed.

Culture of Make Believe by Derrick Jensen. New York: Context, 2002. Context Books 368 Broadway Suite 314 New York, NY 10013. Available in the CAC distro. 701 pgs, paper, \$18.00.

Derrick is one of the most talented writers I've ever read and this book is no exception. The book is enormous in both size and scope and I hope the size doesn't intimidate some readers since it's very easy to get very involved with and it goes rather quick. This book is an extension of *A Language Older than Words* (although it doesn't require any order in reading the books) which was an exploration of the world of domestic abuse and its relation to civilization. This book opens as an explosion as we consider it traces the social at hate crimes, whole exploration how symbolic culture a matter of discipline, as Derrick points out, isn't liberals seek to regulations whole of civilization where this book is

He moves tions of violence be stumped by the ment of lefties what causes specific events: a occupies the understanding and relations of the civilized. Derrick shows the underlying functions of racial hatred, understanding how Europeans would be able to commit all kinds of atrocities against the indigenous peoples and non-whites. Yet he has the ability to confront the complete reality of a situation in all its detail without carrying any kind of callousness.

He points to the kind of hate just mentioned, moving into the kind of hate that fuels conquest and colonization across the world by way of J.R. Morgan and the like. Leaving no questions about just what kind of asshole benefits from the kind of systematic brutality that has shaped our reality. The book stands as a powerful revival of topics that have been the plague of liberals and doing the unthinkable act of saying, look the problem is the whole thing and its right in front of



ration of 'hate' here and now. He 'plague' and looks but puts the into relation of ture works: it's version. The rick brilliantly the 'hate' that strengthen against, but the zation. That is heading. through ques- and refuses to typical treat- and liberals as cific events and about those diversion that



journey to wildness, this book is a great companion.

Running on Emptiness: the Pathology of Civilization, by John Zerzan and introduction by Theresa Kintz. Los Angeles: Feral House, 2002. Available for \$15.00 from Green Anarchy Distro PO Box 11331 Eugene, OR 97440 USA or CAC distro. 214 pgs, paper.

Here is the third full collection of essays by the notorious Anarcho-Primitivist John Zerzan. This book continues with the kind of 'origins' essays that JZ has become known for. His style is to lay out what is all around us, pointing towards the failures of civilization and symbolic thought en masse that surround us and saying "look". Zerzan has laid the path for those who have refused to compromise or lighten the seriousness of the problems we are facing on a global level. His work has pull no punches when pointing to the problems at their source and standing by them, leaving a trail of some of the most important work to ever see print.

This collection jumps right into a few longer essays; 'Running on Emptiness: the Failure of Symbolic Thought', 'Time and Its Discontents', 'Against Technology' and 'That Thing We Do'. These essays, like his work in *Elements of Refusal* and *Future Primitive*, are saying, "the emperor wears no clothes!" The title essay takes on the topic that the anarchist 'movement' has traditionally stayed away from: symbolic thought. As Zerzan alludes, the obviousness of our lack of life is becoming clearer as we are moving into the post-modern, technological symbolism in a completely modernized and artificial world. He continues with the further products of symbolic thought, time and technology. 'That Thing We Do' is an impressive summation of 'reification' and how this underlies the civilized mentality.

Following these essays are some of the shorter pieces that have been circulating for nearly a decade now. This includes 'How Ruinous Does Have to Get?' and 'We Have to Dismantle All This' as well as 'He Means It. Do You?', the *Anarchy* editorial that laid out his support for F.C., the Unabomber. Other topics include the problems of *Star Trek*, Chomsky, Hakim Bey, Post-modernism and more. 'Enemy of the State', the interview with Derrick Jensen, is included as well as a brief autobiography, 'So...How Did You Become an Anarchist', giving readers a clearer view of who JZ is.

This collection is extremely welcomed and offers some of the most important anarchist critique of our time. Anyone interested in the critique of civilization should definitely

As Hegel said somewhere, to question language is to question being. It is very important, however, to resist such overstatements and see the distinction, for one thing, between the cultural importance of language and its inherent limitations. To hold that we and the world are but linguistic creations is just another way of saying how pervasive and controlling is symbolic culture. But Hegel's claim goes much too far, and George Herbert Mead's assertion (1934) that to have a mind one must have a language is similarly hyperbolic and false.

Language transforms meaning and communication but is not synonymous with them. Thought, as Vendler (1967) understood, is essentially independent of language. Studies of patients and others lacking all aspects of speech and language demonstrate that the intellect remains powerful even in the absence of those elements (Lecours and Joannette 1980; Donald 1991). The claim that language greatly facilitates thought is likewise questionable, inasmuch as formal experiments with children and adults have not demonstrated it (G. Cohen 1977). Language is clearly not a necessary condition for thinking (see Kertesz 1988, Jansons 1988).

Verbal communication is part of the movement away from a face-to-face social reality, making feasible physical separateness. The word always stands between people who wish to connect with



each other, facilitating the diminution of what need not be spoken to be said. That we have declined from a non-linguistic state begins to appear a sane point of view. This intuition may lie behind George W. Morgan's 1968 judgment that "Nothing, indeed, is more subject to depreciation and suspicion in our disenchanted world than the word."

Communication outside civilization involved all the senses, a condition linked to the key gatherer-hunter traits of openness and sharing. Literacy ushered us into the society of divided and reduced senses, and we take this sensory deprivation for granted as if it were a natural state, just as we take literacy for granted.

Culture and technology exist because of language. Many have seen speech, in turn, as a means of coordinating labor, that is, as an essential part of the technique of production. Language is critical for the formation of the rules of work and exchange accompanying division of labor, with the specializations and standardizations of nascent economy paralleling those of language. Now guided by symbolization, a new kind of thinking takes over, which realizes itself in culture and technology. The interdependence of language and technology is at least as obvious as that of language and culture, and results in an accelerating mastery over the natural world intrinsically similar to the control introduced over the once autonomous and sensuous individual.

Noam Chomsky, chief language theorist, commits a grave and reactionary error by portraying language as a "natural" aspect of "essential human nature," innate and independent of culture (1966b, 1992). His Cartesian perspective sees the mind as an abstract machine which is simply destined to turn out strings of symbols and manipulate them. Concepts like origins or alienation have no place in this barren techno-schema. Lieberman (1975) provides a concise and fundamental correction: "Human language could have evolved only in relation

to the total human condition."

The original sense of the word define is, from Latin, to limit or bring to an end. Language seems often to close an experience, not to help ourselves be open to experience. When we dream, what happens is not expressed in words, just as those in love communicate most deeply without verbal symbolizing. What has been advanced by language that has really advanced the human spirit? In 1976, von Glasersfeld wondered "whether, at some future time, it will still seem so obvious that language has enhanced the survival of life on this planet."

Numerical symbolism is also of fundamental importance to the development of a cultural world. In many primitive societies it was and is considered unlucky to count living creatures, an anti-reification attitude related to the common primitive notion that to name another is to gain power over that person. Counting, like naming, is part of the domestication process. Division of labor lends itself to the quantifiable, as opposed to what is whole in itself, unique, not fragmented. Number is also necessary for the abstraction inherent in the exchange of commodities and is prerequisite to the take-off of science and technology. The urge to measure involves a deformed kind of knowledge that seeks control of its object, not understanding.

The sentiment that "the only way we truly apprehend things is through art" is a commonplace opinion, one which underlines our dependence on symbols and representation. "The fact that originally all art was 'sacred'" (Eliade, 1985), that is, belonging to a separate sphere, testifies to its original status or function.

Art is among the earliest forms of ideological and ritual expressiveness, developed along with religious observances designed to hold together a communal life that was beginning to fragment. It was a key means of facilitating social integration and economic differentiation (Dickson, 1990), probably by encoding information to register membership, status, and position (Lumsden and Wilson 1983). Prior to this time, somewhere during the Upper Paleolithic, devices for social cohesion were unnecessary; division of labor, separate roles, and territoriality seem to have been largely non-existent. As tensions and anxieties started to emerge in social life, art and the rest of culture arose with them in answer to their disturbing presence.

Art, like religion, arose from the original sense of disquiet, no doubt subtly but powerfully disturbing in its newness and its encroaching gradualness. In 1900 Hirn wrote of an early dissatisfaction that motivated the artistic search for a "fuller and deeper expression" as "compensation for new deficiencies of life." Cultural solutions, however, do not address the deeper dislocations that cultural "solutions" are themselves part of. Conversely, as commentators as diverse as Henry Miller and Theodor Adorno have concluded, there would be no need of art in a disalienated world. What art has ineffectively striven to capture and express would once again be a reality, the false antidote of culture forgotten.

Art is a language and so, evidently, is ritual, among the earliest cultural and symbolic institutions. Julia Kristeva (1989) commented on "the close relation of grammar to ritual," and Frits Staal's studies of Vedic ritual (1982, 1986, 1988) demonstrated to him that syntax can completely explain the form and meaning of ritual. As Chris Knight (1996) noted, speech and ritual are "interdependent aspects of one and the same symbolic domain."

Essential for the breakthrough of the cultural in human affairs, ritual is not only a means of aligning or prescribing emotions; it is also a formalization that is intimately linked with hierarchies and formal rule over individuals. All known tribal societies and early civilizations had hierarchical organizations built on or bound up with a ritual structure and matching conceptual system.

Examples of the link between ritual and inequality, developing even prior to agriculture, are widespread (Gans 1985, Conkey 1984). Rites serve a safety valve function for the discharge of tensions generated by emerging divisions in society and work to create and maintain social cohesion. Earlier on there was no need of devices to unify what was, in a non-division of labor context, still whole and unstratified.

It has often been said that the function of the symbol is to disclose structures of the real that are inaccessible to empirical observation. More to the point, in terms of the processes of culture and civilization, however, is Abner Cohen's contention (1981, 1993)

ney to reawakening the uncivilized, undomesticated self comes through beginning as "an empty cup".

This book is a tool, almost a kind of 'Art of War' for those seeking to move beyond their own domestication. All events are lessons learned through a necessary humility of unlearning the way of the Civilized. The book makes important contrasts between the 'Old Way' and the Civilized, from sentence structures as symbols of mentality through understanding the way in which things act in way. His understanding of 'Old Way' knowledge is rather simple, and he does a prolific job in pointing to the simplest explanation: the Civilized seek out something while the 'Old Way' recognizes, as Talks With Loons so accurately claims, "What is, is" and all life follows this.

This book is a guide for those who seek to follow. He speaks of the importance of reawakening as "Warriors" (or more aptly as "Guardians"), giving direct importance to those who seek to destroy civilization and defend life. He makes no explicit statement about what shape or significance resistance itself plays, and I feel that giving more to this could only give the book an extremely revolutionary kick. It is my understanding that in order to reconnect to life, these journeys remain absolutely *vital*; however, the 'journey to the ancestral self' cannot be separated from the explicitly revolutionary need to end the civilized existence which will only destroy all possibilities for life. I cannot say that Tamarack stands aside from this, and I feel he has actively sought out green anarchists as a part of this total resistance, perhaps more has yet to be said.

I feel that there are some extremely important distinctions that Tamarack has laid out here, and hopefully they will be printed in future issues of Species Traitor. His distinctions between Spirituality (strictly embodiment of the being) and Religion (any point after Spirituality becomes institutionalized and thus can only be alienating) are very powerful and vital. The importance of Spirituality and the need of this kind of relation is vital for resistance, yet his damnation of those who seek to specialize and institutionalize this aspect of life is something we should all keep in mind.

With all of this, I feel that this book is an extremely important addition to the movement against civilization and reconnecting to life and stands as a door to a necessary path. I eagerly await the next two parts (which I'm told will hopefully be printed in December 2003) and I strongly encourage folks get in touch with Tamarack and Teaching Drums. They have an excellent program to help other civilized folk learn how to 'live in harmony with Earth Mother'. Tamarack has regular primitive skills tips and articles in the magazine 'Wilderness Way' (see review). If you are ready to begin the

reviews

books

Journey to the Ancestral Self: the Native Lifeway Guide to Living in Harmony with Earth Mother, Book 1 by Tamarack Song. New York: Station Hill Press, Inc., 1994. Available from Teaching Drum Outdoor School (founded by Tamarack) 7124 Military Rd. Three Lakes, WI 54562 USA (Write for a current newsletter/course brochure) and the CAC distribution. \$15.00, 207 pgs, paper. Also available on cassette.

Journey to the Ancestral Self was written to begin the de-civilizing process, yet it is not intended to be a clinical method or another simple new age solution. The book offers no 'answers' (as the civilized would surely be seeking them) and there are no shortcuts. What Tamarack has done here has been to open the path that his own journeys found which he refers to as the 'Old Way'.

I should stop for a second here and clarify. On face, this may appear or sound like yet another book co-opting 'indigenous knowledge' or 'folklore' in order to leave the reader with a happy contention that they can merge into their de-repressed lives. This is not one of those books. It does have some flaws, like all things written, but what is stressed within is that this journey is one in which we must *seek ourselves*. There is no door or vision that is being offered here that the reader can (or should) just pick up and walk on with and this is what separates this book from all the other claiming to 'bring the reader closer to nature'.

This is the first installment of a three part series in which Tamarack has taken the print medium ("Books have become our Elders") to serve as a kind of guide to help start individuals out on their own journey. He has no illusions about the problems that come with this, but the book is written as a realization of his own searching. That realization is that civilization has torn us from the lifeway of our ancestors and has taken us from the Earth and "Oneness" that would be ours to discover if only we could return to that path.

He points out that his awakening came from the northern states among the Ojibway. He talks about his disappointment and constant search for something within civilization. His years of roaming and seeking out any bit of life in any way as the book opens with his encounter with 'She Who Talks With Loons' who would become his guide. Through his own experiences and realizations he begins by pointing out the importance of realizing nothingness before beginning the journey. The jour

that symbolism and ritual disguise, mystify and sanctify irksome duties and roles and thus make them seem desirable. Or, as David Parkin (1992) put it, the compulsory nature of ritual blunts the natural autonomy of individuals by placing them at the service of authority.

Ostensibly opposed to estrangement, the counter-world of public rites is arrayed against the current of historical direction. But, again, this is a delusion, since ritual facilitates the establishment of the cultural order, bedrock of alienated theory and practice. Ritual authority structures play an important part in the organization of production (division of labor) and actively further the coming of domestication. Symbolic categories are set up to control the wild and alien; thus the domination of women proceeds, a development brought to full realization with agriculture, when women become essentially beasts of burden and/or sexual objects. Part of this fundamental shift is movement toward territorialism and warfare; Johnson and Earle (1987) discussed the correspondence between this movement and the increased importance of ceremonialism.

According to James Shreeve (1995), "In the ethnographic record, wherever you get inequality, it is justified by invoking the sacred." Relatedly, all symbolism, says Eliade (1985), was originally religious symbolism. Social inequality seems to be accompanied by subjugation in the non-human sphere. M. Reinach (quoted in Radin, 1927) said, "thanks to magic, man takes the offensive against the objective world." Cassirer (1955) phrased it this way: "Nature yields nothing without ceremonies."

Out of ritual action arose the shaman, who was not only the first specialist because of his or her role in this area, but the first cultural practitioner in general. The earliest art was accomplished by shamans, as they assumed ideological leadership and designed the content of rituals.

This original specialist became the regulator of group emotions, and as the shaman's potency increased, there was a corresponding decrease in the psychic vitality of the rest of the group (Lommel, 1967). Centralized authority, and most likely religion too, grew out of the elevated position of the shaman. The specter of social complexity was incarnated in this individual who wielded symbolic power. Every head man and chief developed from the primacy of this figure in the lives of others in the group.

Religion, like art, contributed to a common symbolic grammar needed by the new social order and its fissures and anxieties. The word is based on the Latin *religare*, to tie or bind, and a Greek verbal stem denoting attentiveness to ritual, faithfulness to rules. Social integration, required for the first time, is evident as impetus to religion.

It is the answer to insecurities and tensions, promising resolution and transcendence by means of the symbolic. Religion finds no basis for its existence prior to the wrong turn taken toward culture and the civilized (domesticated). The American philosopher George Santayana summed it up well with, "Another world to live in is what we mean by religion."

Since Darwin's *Descent of Man* (1871) we have understood that human evolution greatly accelerated culturally at a time of insignificant physiological change. Thus symbolic being did not depend on waiting for the right gifts to evolve. We can now see, with Clive Gamble (1994), that intention in human action did not arrive with domestication/agriculture/civilization.

The native denizens of Africa's Kalahari Desert, as studied by Laurens van der Post (1976), lived in "a state of complete trust, dependence and interdependence with nature," which was "far kinder to them than any civilization ever was." Egalitarianism and sharing were the hallmark qualities of hunter-gatherer life (G. Isaac 1976, Ingold 1987, 1988, Erdal and Whiten 1992, etc.), which is more accurately called gatherer-hunter life, or the foraging mode. In fact, the great bulk of this diet consisted of plant material, and there is no conclusive evidence for hunting at all prior to the Upper Paleolithic (Binford 1984, 1985).

An instructive look at contemporary primitive societies is Colin Turnbull's work (1961, 1965) on pygmies of the Ituri forest and their Bantu neighbors. The pygmies are foragers, living with no religion or culture. They are seen as immoral and ignorant by the agriculturalist Bantu, but enjoy much greater individualism and freedom. To the annoyance of the Bantu, the pygmies irreverently mock the solemn rites of the latter and their sense of sin. Rejecting territorialism, much less private holdings, they "move freely in an uncharted, unsystematized, unbounded social world," according to Mary Douglas (1973).

The vast era prior to the coming of symbolic being is an enormously prominent reality and a question mark to some. Commenting on this "period spanning more than a million years," Tim Ingold (1993) called it "one of the most profound enigmas known to archaeological science." But the longevity of this stable, non-cultural epoch has a simple explanation: as F. Goodman (1988) surmised, "It was such a harmonious existence, and such a successful adaptation, that it did not materially alter for many thousands of years."

Culture triumphed at last with domestication. The scope of life became narrower, more specialized, forcibly divorced from its previous grace and spontaneous liberty. The assault of a symbolic orientation upon the natural also had immediate outward results. Early rock drawings, found 125 miles from the nearest recorded trickle of water in the Sahara, show people swimming. Elephants were still somewhat common in some coastal Mediterranean zones in 500 B.C., wrote Herodotus. Historian Clive Ponting (1992) has shown that every civilization has diminished the health of its environment.

And cultivation definitely did not provide a higher-quality or more reliable food base (M.N. Cohen 1989, Walker and Shipman 1996), though it did introduce diseases of all kinds, almost completely unknown outside civilization (Burkett 1978, Freund 1982), and sexual inequality (M. Ehrenberg 1989b, A. Getty 1996). Frank Waters' *Book of the Hopi* (1963) gives us a stunning picture of unchecked division of labor and the poverty of the symbolic: "More and more they traded for things they didn't need, and the more goods they got, the more they wanted. This was very serious. For they did not realize they were drawing away, step by step, from the good life given them."

A pertinent chapter from *The Time Before History* (1996) by Colin Tudge bears a title that speaks volumes, "The End of Eden: Farming." Much of an underlying epistemological distinction is revealed in this contrast (1993): "In

whereas for herds-
men
instrument
for hunters
it would
garded as an
revelation."
Horkheimer
quoting, in
psychic cost
of domestication/dominance of nature: "the destruction of the inner life is the penalty man has to pay for having no respect for any life other than his own." Violence directed outward is at the same time inflicted spiritually, and the outside world becomes transformed, debased, as surely as the perceptual field was subjected to fundamental redefinition. Nature certainly did not ordain civilization; quite the contrary.

Today it is fashionable, if not mandatory, to maintain that culture always was and always will be. Even though it is demonstrably the case that there was an extremely long non-symbolic human era, perhaps one hundred times as long as that of civilization, and that culture has gained only at the expense of nature, one has it from all sides that the symbolic — like alienation — is eternal. Thus questions of origins and destinations are meaningless. Nothing can be traced further than the semiotic in which everything is trapped.

But the limits of the dominant rationality and the costs of civilization are too starkly visible for us to accept this kind of cop-out. Since the ascendancy of the symbolic humans have been trying, through participation in culture, to recover an authenticity we once lived. The constant urge or quest for the transcendent testifies that the hegemony of absence is a cultural constant. As Thomas McFarland (1987) found, "culture primarily witnesses the absence of meaning, not its presence."

Massive, unfulfilling consumption, within the dictates of production and social control, reigns as the chief everyday consolation for this absence of meaning, and culture is certainly itself a prime consumer choice. At base, it is division of labor that ordains our false

Our actions may very well be futile, and we may be just like the salmon bashing ourselves to death against the dams that stand in our way. But looking at the fate of civilization and the rapid decay of this Empire we have to ask ourselves what have we got to lose? Seeing the alienated, cyber wasteland that lies before us I can only think of the words of Raoul Vaneigem, "We have a world of pleasures to win, and nothing to lose but boredom." Perhaps we have the chance to enact on his war cry, "You won't fuck with us much longer!" We can either sit back waiting for the moment as it passes us by, or we can take the chance to win a world in which we will have the chance to fulfill our desires and actualize true autonomy and self-determination.

Our questions should no longer revolve around when, but how? What is it that we feel in our hearts is the most effective thing to do, or just to start trusting our instincts. It may not be the most effective thing in the long run to smash up some chain stores, but domestication only fills us with rage and taking it out directly on those who have been building this seems to be a powerful assertion of our chaotic being.

We understand that time is running out, and our options are only being limited. If we continue to hold out, then we risk the chance of being completely silenced. Our goal should be empowerment and exposing the State for what it is. What will it take before you are ready to start giving civilization its final shove and stand up for yourself? Let us stand up now while we still have the chance and fight on our own terms before we no longer have the option. Shoot for the grid.

In the Spirit of Po-he-yemu,
a primal warrior among many.



we are running out of time to react.

There is the other point that I mentioned earlier, that the time isn't right. This comes from thinking not only are things not bad enough, but that we should wait for some kind of mass movement or revolution. I'm constantly wondering what exactly it is that we are waiting for here. People all know that shit is getting worse, but we're literally sedated to the point of passivity.

I'm not sure what it will take to break that spell and get people on their ass, and maybe they won't until things get so bad that they have no other option. My interests aren't in appealing to these people that civilization is the factor behind our problems so that they can sit around and wait for everyone else to figure it out. My interests are in realizing that civilization is killing all life on this planet and while it exists autonomy (in the true sense of the word) is impossible. All I know is the sooner we start acting, the better our chances are of resistance.

I hope that there would be a revolution (one to abolish power, not seize it: power corrupts absolutely), but I'm not holding out for it. For all I know it will take guerilla movements to be the spark of the revolution, and maybe the ELF could be one of those fronts. No revolution has ever come from one single source, but a growing number of people dedicated and serious about removing what stands before them can only serve as inspiration for others to start doing something.

We should be learning from the ELF style actions. Groups of decentralized, completely autonomous cells have been active all over the world to take on the problem of civilization. Look at the number of actions that have been done, without a doubt by numerous dedicated individuals and still the governments have only been able to grab a few alleged "members". We have the ability to strike wisely and effectively because we have the ability to look at a history of failed revolutions to see something that the others may have missed. A strong tide of autonomous cells that defy the traditional call for "organization" may be just what is needed.

and disabling symbolic totality. "The increase in specialization...." wrote Peter Lomas (1996), "undermines our confidence in our ordinary capacity to live."

We are caught in the cultural logic of objectification and the objectifying logic of culture, such that those who counsel new ritual and other representational forms as the route to a re-enchanting existence miss the point completely. More of what has failed for so long can hardly be the answer. Levi-Strauss (1978) referred to "a kind of wisdom [that primitive peoples] practiced spontaneously and the rejection of which, by the modern world, is the real madness."

Either the non-symbolizing health that once obtained, in all its dimensions, or, madness and death. Culture has led us to betray our own aboriginal spirit and wholeness, into an ever-worsening realm of synthetic, isolating, impoverished estrangement. Which is not to say that there are no more everyday pleasures, without which we would lose our humanness. But as our plight deepens, we glimpse how much must be erased for our redemption.

[See the book for bibliography]



THE SPECTACLE OF THE SYMBOLIC

BY KEVIN TUCKER



Life is an interconnected web of beings. This is existence, this is life. Without that web we are all nothing. Take a look around your Reality and try to find what is necessary to your existence, what will you die without? This isn't like playing the game of our Culture, the Culture of Commodification, where we ask what we would die for, what would we kill for (overlooking all the things we are killing for). Instead, this question is an honest search for what we need in life.

Ceci n'est pas une pipe.

The focus here will be on the way symbolic culture, the mentality of civilization, has invaded our consciousness. The kind of power relations needed for governments to exist rests on our recognition of that power. While not believing in their power won't make civilization just go away, the realization that life exists beyond the survival that we've had to deal with. Recognizing our own potential is one step in reclaiming our lives.

The Creation Of Power

Before we begin talking of civilization, we must understand what we are talking about. Civilization moves off power yet no where on Earth does power truly exist. Power is not a thing, but a relation of domination and ownership, an idea. Power is the product of property, be it place, person or what have you. In a world of limited wants and unlimited means, ownership (which can not exist without property) is useless. The world of the forager must be one that can follow the migrations of herds or adapt to the seasonal availability of plants, insects, and any other flora that makes up the majority of the diet and such a world has no place for 'possessions'.

A nomad is limited by what they can move with, although this is hardly a limitation. The creation of 'property' is the product of being sedentary or staying places for longer periods of time. The more attached you are to a particular area the more able you are to keep things you would normally have to move with regularly. What we have learned from anthropology and the failures of domestication is that our way of survival is very recent. We have seen qualitative differences between the spiritual wealth of foragers, which anthropologist Marshall Sahlins has called the "original affluent society", and the poverty of our materialistic 'wealth' addictions.

As anarchists, the most important difference here refers to autonomy. Power is the result of institutionalized specialization. Foragers recognize those who tend to excel in one particular area of life, a role which we commonly misperceive as 'leaders'. However, as anthropologist Pierre Clastres points out in his book *Societies Against the State*, foraging societies are not just stateless (as if the state just hasn't happened yet), but "societies against the state", meaning they had no will to give up their autonomy or recognize that any particular person should control the lives of others. So in 'primitive' societies across the world, you see social taboos that keep any individual from acquiring power.

This has been recognized in foragers like the !Kung of the Kalahari who will insult or chop down the hunter/s who brings in a lot of meat. To an outsider this would be considered deeply offensive, but the point is to keep the people all at one level so no individual can have a big ego. Customs like this are nearly universal, and they signify the conscious recognition that power over others doesn't benefit the rest of the people.

What has been further studied by Clastres and others is that while certain individuals are acknowledged as being particularly good at certain activities, there is no institutionalization of their role. Although they are recognized as more able or useful during certain periods (i.e., hunts, battles, or medicine), that role dies with them. When a particularly good hunter passes on, there are no elections to 'fill that slot', because no real 'slot' ever existed.

that on September 11, 1973 the Pinochet coup took control. Within days of the coup, thousands of 'activists' and politicians were herded into the national stadium and other centers for either years of torture and imprisonment or death only to be officially 'disappeared' (many of those who were rounded up are still officially 'missing'). Where do you think they learned all of this and who do you think helped raise the whole movement up? I'll spare the details of the torture, but I'll assure whoever is reading this that the fate of late resort armed uprising is far preferable to the mental suffering of living in, or even worse, surviving some of these sessions.

So where do we stand? How far removed from all this are we and how long are we going to sit on the sidelines while we wait for things to get far worse. If we plan to survive this, or at least stand a fighting chance, then it would do us no harm to begin preparing for the worse case scenario. Once we have the skills to not only fight against civilization and understand its tactics, as well as learn how to survive beyond all this, that cannot be taken from us.

Surely there are those who read or hear this and feel that if we begin to arm ourselves and prepare for what may or may not be coming then we are only urging the government to take harsher measures now. That this response would come about at all is showing of the kind of safety net that comes with the totality of civilized thought, but as we have seen in the past and will see in the future, the State is a propaganda machine and as long as it can turn our anger and rage towards each other as the guilty ones, then it will be able to carry out its flow. Look back at Seattle 1999 (for the millionth time) and see that force was used before real resistance broke out.

Again though, this still takes it for granted that the actions of those institutions of power aren't committing the ultimate act of force and coercion to begin with. I'm tired of living my life on others terms and I'm not going to wait until I'm faced with direct death before I assert myself. What will it take before people realize that what we're faced with is coming for us in due time. Things will get worse, and



are the most appropriate tactics. But how much longer can we keep sitting out? Our response shows only our distance from the matter at hand, we don't directly feel the pinch (other than economic, but that just comes with war right?), so we steer clear and stick to peaceful displays of dissent against war.

The reality of the situation is that things are going to keep getting worse, and this applies the world over. While we sit around and decide what tactic is best, the real situation is that the U.S. is a dying Empire, and you can bet your ass that it will fall kicking and screaming. The measures taken after September 11th show that the fear isn't just some attack or invasion from outside, but fear from within (and I'm not talking about some "sleepers" or any other crackpot scheme). The government is preparing for martial law and exposing its militaristic side.

Are we going to wait until those of us who have had any part in 'radical' (anti)politics are rounded up once and for all before we decide that maybe we should start acting in self defense? Well, if the pacifists and so forth decide that's what's appropriate or that we should keep waiting it out to see what happens that's their own damn problem when the fist starts to come down. My response isn't hysteria and paranoia, but knowing damn well what this State is capable and willing to do (the information about what the government has in store is not hard to find).

Look at Chile: it's hardly any odd coincidence

What this signifies is the kind of flexibility that foraging existence allows. It is recognized that there is typically a sexual division of labor in 'primitive' societies, but again the people are autonomous in the sense that positions are not institutionalized, meaning there is no systemic ruling that men will do this or women do that (foragers don't apply sexist standards or values). In every sense of the word, these peoples live in anarchy, a life devoid of power relations and offering full autonomy.

These kinds of specifics are not the focus here because they are rather well covered elsewhere and I can't recommend enough that people seek this knowledge out. What is important here is an understanding that life exists beyond the sacrificial order of civilization, and that things such as 'power' can only be maintained so long as their role is upheld. A revolt against the power/civilized mentality is a big step towards taking down this beast.

The Repression Of Being And Wildness

Humans have spent over 99.9% of our existence on this planet as foragers. Our food was scavenged, gathered or hunted. To exist this way means that you must be an active member in the larger community of life: the world around and of you, the state of wildness. If you cannot be a part of this, then there will be nothing to sustain and support you: when an animal is separated from their wildness, they become separated from life. It's even simpler than this really, if you do not understand, respect and place yourself in the world around you, you lose a place in that reality, and because of this you can't take and give as one would to survive. Our groundlessness and depression only feeds this reality.

The forager has nothing more than a completely intimate relationship with their extended selves: the world around them. Civilized understandings must misrepresent this so that it can continue to exist and devour. To know the layers of growth and life in the world is more than just a question of survival, but knowledge of the self, since it gives placement and the knowledge of being within. The forager never destroys this; it serves no purpose to exploit something that is a part of you.

The Civilized being has devastated one of the most intimate aspects of life: eating and fulfilling the needs of our bodies. When we are getting food, we are buying pieces of our own death, wrapped in cellophane, priced by the pound and canned. We have pieces of paper that represent pieces of our lives sold off to someone who gets more use out of us as machines than as beings. We exchange these two things as objects and the whole process is burnt into our minds.

You see our separations: pieces of wildness, long since tamed and beaten into the right packages, shined up and ready to be sold off. Each bit is a replica of the shining, glorious product of years of mixing and matching, of buffing and waxing the gene pool: throwing away millions of years of adaptation and existence, taking and giving for whatever immediate need there seems to be. It's all there before our eyes and through our bodies, as seen on the charts or on the TV or in the textbooks. These bits of our giant, decaying corpse are taken in, they are symbols of parts of life, which has long since been chopped up and served to us.

The food becomes a symbol for nourishment; you have to eat according to the planned pyramid scheme in order to stay afloat which is represented by the notion of Health. And it's all a delusion, what we're eating is isolated deaths warped shadows of our wild selves, sprayed, infested, exploiting, shipped and handled, all removed from anything living and sustaining. What we eat is no longer to be taken in and let out, in order to continue the cycle of life. It is plastic, and it only sustains an image, a giant symbol, to be devoured, wrenched dry by the suffocating innards to be thrown out and flushed off into the nothingness that will only haunt the world as a symbol of the most destructive epidemic to face this planet.

Meditation And Symbolic Life

Inherent to the poverty of this way of survival is something so simple that it can be frightening. All the drudgery and disgust of everyday 'life' comes from the separation of ourselves from the rest of the world. This isn't some quick solution or easy answer, but the reality of our situation. What is making the distinction between us and everything else is what we call symbolic culture.

So it seems right now might be the perfect time to kick it down a step, take things back, especially when the words 'symbolic thought' or 'symbolic culture' alone are enough to bore someone either back to sleep or just get some kind of disinterest in an intangible idea, but what is going to be shown here is that this isn't anything like that. The effects of symbolic culture come through in every aspect of daily life and its side effects. So what the hell is all this anyways then? The best way to look at it is back.

Human beings are animals, that is, you and I and every single person is an animal. No matter how much we try and act like we aren't, and especially when we kill off most of the planet to try and prove otherwise, we are and always will be animals. The driving force behind this supposed 'Progress' and actual destruction comes from an ideology that has been about 10,000 years in the making: symbolic culture.

As John Zerzan points out in 'Running on Emptiness', symbolic culture is the outcome of excessive symbolization. It occurs when the senses have been domesticated into a "symbolic cultural atmosphere". What symbolic culture is then is an institutionalization of symbols, removing them from the direct senses into a single vision that becomes a basis for the group/tribe/clan/empire. This is the dawn of Civilization.

Everything that we have come to accept as Reality and base our perceptions on spreads off of the base of sedentary, intensive agriculture: the great settling which gave rise to power. This isn't to say that the first seed planted was some kind of fall from heaven. Humans have been taking an active part in their surroundings for the millions of years that we (and our predecessors) have existed. Growing food



was no new idea and living mainly this was hardly novel. What separates this (horticulture) from sedentary agriculture (and thus Civilization) is the point at which settlement becomes permanence.

This idea has much more behind it than one might think it could. The difference between an Agricultural society and others who would grow even large percentages of their own food is a mentality: a basic sentiment of detachment. Maybe we should look back further.

Possession

"Some of the people who left the human communities remembered some of the qualities. They remembered some of the joys of possession—not possession of things but possession of Being."

—Fredy Perlman, *Against His-Story, Against Leviathan*

Those who have shaped our Reality (from the shaman on to the priest, politician, scientist, and so on) would have us believe that what is essential to life are 'Things,' bits and pieces of a shattered world replaced by objects that can be bought, sold, inherited or auctioned. Understanding this only takes our search further back, but what is it that we (as individuals) associate with? We see objects that reflect an imaginary 'collective consciousness' (the 'collective consciousness' as individuals associating their own abilities and actions with that of some kind of 'collective' with others they share some traits with, think nation, race, culture, and so on), that is all the of us determined consumers as individual versions of civilization, all of us as proto-cyborgs (we are physically alive, but lack all qualities of 'life', and our interests are technologically driven): multi-functioning parts of the giant Mega-Machine.

it seems that most of those so eager to take part in the rising tide have remained in hiding.

After September 11, those of us here in the United States had the chance to back down. We're still faced with government repression and all the new war-time legislation is only making sure that it's all done officially now. We shouldn't overlook that some of that legislation was in the works to combat the ELF and ALF actions. There was a serious threat then, what happened?

Perhaps too many of us take it for granted and fall for the whole 'freedom' rap, but I'm not buying it. We have certain options that some countries may make harder, but it certainly isn't because the government respects us! We have those illusions of freedom because the State works most effectively when we believe that we have options. They know how to make us cower when they open up their real face, and we have fallen for their ploy. We're playing it safe, but how much longer will we have our 'safe zone' of 'freedom' to protect us.

The war that started on "terrorism", moving through Afghanistan to Iraq and North Korea, under the boasted sanctity that Bush has made for himself by playing the 'terrorist victims' card, may very well be the beginning of another world war. Bush has been set on dividing the world into terrorists or saints and rallying for all to either join us or face us, what else could this all be building up to?

The original question remains: when will be the time that we realize our time is running out? Those in the Middle East and Asia no longer have the option to run away and bury their heads to the reality of an Empire running out of fuel, literally. We are annihilating these nations to maintain our 'way of life'. Our precious 'way of life' that allows us to sit and ponder our moral value and worth while the rest of the world faces our bombs, industries, clear cuts, plows, marginalization, and ultimate judgment with a dose of good ol' fashioned Yankee imperialism. We have the chance to keep playing it safe and holding out for that right moment when all the people in the U.S. smart up a bit and realize what's going on here.

This is civilization playing itself out, and our reaction is to keep on waiting and talking about what

NOW OR NEVER



Civilization is collapsing: the evidence is all around us and people know it. Whether or not the lefties and academics address it or people point to it directly, we can all feel it in our being. Things are getting worse and worse and the mild protest and reform movements aren't doing much to stop this inevitable flow. Things will continue to get worse before they get better.

It's not my intent to go into detail about the coming collapse or even to make a case for its inevitability in the near future (future issues of Species Traitor will be dealing with this, but the topic is by no means new). What I'm interested in pointing to here is the need to be prepared for just how bad things are going to get and to push people to try and act here and now.

The topic of armed struggle and confrontations have been held off by some of the radical (and pushed off almost entirely by progressives) milieu under the misunderstanding that the time is not right or there isn't enough support for such actions. The question remains then, when will be the right time, what will be the right circumstances? Are we supposed to wait off until the last moment before we finally stand up as autonomous beings and react to the system as it chokes off our last breath? What is it that we are really waiting for?

There was a steadily growing movement of dissent that was forming prior to September 11, 2001, and in many ways that movement had been reaching the point when it was time to start looking for something new. People from that movement were already starting to up the stakes, and we shouldn't forget that the Genoa riots were possibly the largest to come from the anti-globalization/mass demo segment. The stakes are being increasingly raised, but as soon as the guns turn back on the United States everyone ran for cover. The increasing ELF and ALF actions dropped off and the flame was dimmed. We backed off then because we could, and

We might respond to such comments as absurd, surely there are people in our lives that we value over things! Yet we lack the ability to separate our relations with others any more than treating them as 'things'. Our relationships are weighable by capitalist standards of what we can 'gain' or may 'lose' from each situation. We have those that we are 'close' to (perhaps we fall under the same 'personality' type or have a capitalist valuable relationship) and then there are those who just, consequently, fall on the other side of the scale, just underneath those shoes or cars we 'had to have.'

The Beginning Of Things

"People do not exploit a nature that speaks to them. But a nature that, as two famous nineteenth-century ethnocentrics expressed it, 'faced humans initially as an entirely foreign, all-powerful and unassailable might, towards which they behaved as animals, and which they allowed to lord it over them as if they were brutes'; such a nature has no language of its own any more, it is merely matter.

"...people do not exploit those they understand. But when out among strangers, there is a tendency towards barricading oneself in one's 'subjectivity' much more even than at home, and what is strange is alienated by blocked the avenues of trust."

-Hans Peter DUERR,

Dreamtime: Concerning the Boundary between Wilderness and Civilization

It could be said that power was the origin of symbolic culture. The ability to subject others is necessary to begin a system of pure domination. The symbolic mediation of language was still capable of keeping some attachment to the world. The language of foragers is tied to that time and space. With civilization, there is conquest and colonization, as uprooted people begin spreading. In order to grow, it is required that you have standardization. Languages became universal and the detachment completed, their use was removed from direct experience to the realm of power relations.

It is important to understand that you can't just live within a hierarchy, it must be internalized and the individuals must think, breathe and speak it. This is the role of symbolic culture, to internalize the will of the powerful. The world that we are a part of has, since agriculture, become a thing. Our lives are removed from the chaos of life in search of artificial order.

Turning Myth Into Stone

"(Writing) initiated what print and computers only continue, the reduction of dynamic sound to quiescent space, the separation of the word from the living present, where alone spoken words can exist."

-Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy: the Technologizing of the word*

What Zizek does in his essay 'Running on Emptiness' is point to the progression of symbolic thought as it not only mediates, but replaces life. We are seeing the split of the wild and the tamed. The split becomes more defined over time and the world we are of becomes another object to fully subjugate. We unleash Reason upon the world, a system of justification for our exploitation. Reason acts against its opposite 'instinct', as it tries to move humans out of being animals (although it begins at first along the lines of culture, race and sex).

The language of Reason is a pure symbolization. As we know it now, it is the product of the 'enlightenment' and comes from literacy. In his book, *Orality and Literacy*, Walter Ong boasts of the joys of literacy while doing us the service of charting its disruption to human consciousness. Civilized oral (without writing) cultures were capable of creating destructive ideologies, but writing perfected the process (see 'Writing our Fate'). The deed essentially perfects systems of barter, but also begins to remove itself fully from the present.

Myth serves as memory for oral peoples. The myths could shape reality and be shaped by events, positively or negatively. With writing, those myths would be cut

off from the fluidity of life. People become fixed to what is 'written in stone'. The great religious texts serve as witness to this. The myths of the Old Testament are co-opted from pagan cultures and others who recognized a fall from bliss but wouldn't turn back. It seems that the power of the great monotheistic religions had to exploit the world with such vigor came from the written 'word of God' which was frozen in time.

Writing perfects Reason as it extends justification away from the 'real world' to the world of ideas. Our current epidemic needs no other justification than the written decree of the 'experts'. In this way, we can disregard our exploitation of the Earth because it has been written otherwise. We keep our face in books and media as life is being killed right before us. Symbolic culture is essentially what allows us to turn our cheek as our lives have become fully mediated.

The Symbols Spectacularized



The processes of Science and Reason rationalize and suppress the chaos of life. We categorize, therefore we are not the foundation has been laid to divide and conquer our world. Our world has become symbolic and we are free to manipulate at our will. Without this alteration of perception, we could have never done what we (the culture of cities Civilization, not individuals, or our 'species')

have. Modern life is symbolic culture spectacularized. Through our mega-technology we've succeeded in creating a candy-coated mediation.

Situationist Guy Debord noted the problem of symbolic culture in his book *The Society of the Spectacle*. "All that once was directly lived has become mere representation." Our world has been reduced, quantified and qualified to the point where we are all just spectators to "an immense accumulation of spectacles."

Our religious/scientific rationality becomes tangible through the media. Social critic Susan Sontag made the effects of visual media the focus of her book *On Photography*. She recognized the issue of tangibility:

"Photographs are a way of imprisoning reality, understood as recalcitrant, inaccessible; of making it stand still. Or they enlarge a reality that is felt to be shrunk, hollowed out, perishable, remote. One can't possess reality, one can possess (and be possessed by) images..."

What Sontag is pointing to is this process of reification, basically the process of turning reality into symbols, things.

At this point, aided by print and audio-visual recordings, symbolic culture has become autonomous. While in the past symbolic culture existed to mediate human relations to all life, it was still stuck in that moment (although looking forward). With these new recording technologies, the past becomes as real as the present. Time and space become unimportant/indiscipherable, and we are constantly reproducing a reality.

Kurt Vonnegut's novel, *Slaughterhouse Five*, comes to mind as we exist in timelessness like his main character. With a recorded memory we are able to put ourselves back into any time or situation recorded. We live in virtual reality as this constant surreal world becomes our obsession. The civilized seeks to absorb all experience so we flock to movies, television, theme parks, malls (shopping for new identities), and the internet. People pour into 'new and bigger' possessions seeking new pain killers and distractions searching for that pure experience. With our minds turned towards the virtual reality, we only become absorbed and forget to look outside the box-world for life.

What this 'autonomous spectacle' means is that it continues for its own reasons. Our reality is becoming more and more groundless as our level of technology soars past the amount of authentic experience. Civilization seeks perfection for the



SOLIDARITY MEANS ATTACK

by Critter

Before starting this rant I want to address the fact that I'm probably going to piss off and alienate some of the 'supporters' here by writing this. Tough shit. The reason I'm writing this is not to make friends. It's to make people think. If you get offended by what I've got to say there is probably some reason beyond that I'm just an asshole, but that's a title I'll gladly accept if this gets even one person to expand their efforts toward actually putting ecological corporations out of business for good.

There are many people out there who call themselves 'supporters' of the ALF, ELF, Earth First!, or other groups doing direct action, but if all these supporters out there only support from outside the movement they are doing little more than pacifying their consciences. Solidarity means attack.

Solidarity is defined in my cheap-ass prison dictionary as "a unity of interests among a group," and unity is defined as "singleness of purpose or action" (my emphasis). If someone states that they are in solidarity with myself or other ecologically motivated saboteurs that singleness of purpose is to stop the destruction of the many different life forms that share this planet with us. So if one is truly in solidarity with us (s)he does not only sit around talking about how much they support direct action (s)he gets their hands dirty and takes action. I do not consider wearing some environmental groups t-shirt or simply stating that one supports direct action solidarity. The ecological forces destroying life on this planet need to be taken out, and talking just isn't going to do it. The dissemination of news of actions can be a valuable tool, the kind of thing that inspires action, but it is action that will bring this system to its knees while those who only speak of support continue to live on their knees giving tribute to the masters by perpetuating the myth that we are free because we can say that we support direct action.

Talk is not enough, it's not even close - if there were as many people swinging hammers in the forest as there are people running chainsaws, these chainsaws wouldn't be running long. I've heard some supporters of direct action say that direct action and sabotage aren't for everyone, well why the fuck not? When I've raised this question in the past my 'white male privilege' has been raised as an issue. Though this may be a valid point, some people seem to be more interested in pointing fingers than confronting the privilege (though I probably shouldn't call it a privilege but stupidity) that allows them to sit back in relative comfort while allowing, through their inaction, life form after life form to be eradicated. Talking about supporting direct action and sabotage just isn't going to cut it. This isn't about competition, it's not about who has monkey wrenches more machinery or who has liberated more lab animals. It's about the fact that if we all don't start doing something soon we are all fucked. It's not about the one or two or two hundred endangered species that you didn't give enough of a fuck about to spur you into action. It's about the web of life and how your inaction is tantamount to every life form on this planet is on the road to extinction that's been paved by the human race, and you are to blame if you don't do something drastic to stop civilization's destructive course. Solidarity is not a word to throw around to make you feel like you belong. Solidarity means attack.



CRAIG "CRITTER" MARSHALL IS SERVING A FIVE AND A HALF YEAR SENTENCE FOR TORCHING SOME SUV'S ON BEHALF OF THE EARTH. HIS RELUCTANCE TO BE SHUT UP BY THE STATE HAS KEPT HIM UNDER INCREASED REPRESSION. SOLIDARITY IS VITAL, STRIKE A MATCH FOR CRITTER AND THE EARTH.

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It is unfortunate but as I see it, a great deal of the human concern for the environment is mainly focused on the impact that destroying ecosystems and wildlife is having on humanity. This is another fine example of how humanity's selfishness comes to surface. "How will it affect me?"-this is the overall mentality /problem that people involved /engulfed in civilization need to overcome for any life on this planet to survive. Unfortunately, this thought of "how will it affect humans" is mostly what brings people to turn towards environmentalism. This is also the same mentality that keeps the majority of environmentalists working within, thus supporting, a system that is based on this type of egotistical selfishness. We need to break away from this mentality. A lost ecosystem is permanent whereas any success that is found through environmental legislation is temporary. Anyone who disagrees should look at what the Reagan and Bush administrations did to disable environmental laws previously passed. Not that any other presidential administration was/is good; I'm just saying that these were some of the worst in this regard. It is my belief that as a movement, we need to focus on how humans can co-exist with nature at a bare minimum; at optimum, how can we stop civilization from existing at all; but really aren't these one in the same? To co-exist with nature doesn't mean we need to pull away from civilization; it means we have to dismantle it.

It is beyond the point where we can just break off from society to live in the wild and have it bring about any positive change. While this would take another person out of the corporate death machine it would do nothing to dismantle it, thus it would continue to churn. We need to be doing this for life on this planet, because as long as people are only concerned with this viewpoint of "how can we save the planet for our children?", they are overlooking the reality of the situation. If people are only concerned with human life they are never going to see what's been staring them in the face since the dawn of time: Everything on this planet is part of a balancing act and one needs to look at all sides of this intricate scale. If you remove something from one side of this intricate scale, all of the other sides are affected.

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sake of perfection. Suppose full automation and simulation was possible, we have to ask ourselves if this is what is desirable. We must ask, what does it mean to be human?

In his book *Against His-story, Against Leviathan!* Fredy Perlman recognized how spectacularized, mega-technological civilization is essentially devouring the entire world as it searches for more. The deprivation is all around us

"From the day when battery-run voices began broadcasting old speeches battery-run listeners, the beast has been talking to itself. Having swallow everyone and everything outside itself, the beast becomes its own sole frame of reference. It entertains itself, exploits itself and wars on itself. It has reached the end of its progress, for there is nothing left for it to progress against except itself."

The spectacle of symbolic culture has essentially become a 'reality' TV show rerun. All is predictable and equitable as the media produces and sell reality. We are consuming ourselves and our situation is sounding like P.O. described it in 'Industrial Society and its Future', that we are only being formed into the technological system. I stand by that conclusion that "It would be better to dump the whole stinking system and take the consequences."

The Worker And The Consumer

Our current values are predetermined by Capitalist notions of what is important and what it means to be a person. The Consumer takes their value by their freedom to choose buying habits, and maintaining a prescribed level of self determination, taking pride in the product availability that colonization and exploitation have brought them.

The Consumer is the extension of the Worker identity, being pushed further into the Consumer category in this Culture by the importance of a stronger breed of people willing to fill their spiritual void with more and more crap. The Worker is identified by their labor ("what do you do for a living?"), this is what they have brought into existence. We take pride in the fact that every thing we bring into existence makes us just that much more similar to God, but the novelty is quickly wearing.

The role of the Worker has lost it's little bit of shimmer as the Worker ends up being more and more a piece of the Machine itself. Capitalism succeeds in making beings into nothing more than machines. We have become *proletarianized*, that is we are worth no more what we can 'contribute' to the capitalist economy. Those who have no 'value' or aren't worth being 'added' to the economy are considered obstacles to the 'inevitable' Progress.

For those of us living within civilization this has meant a number of things. The past 'revolutionary' movements have sought to reform the means of production because they had completely internalized their worth as 'proletarians', as workers.

The Industrial Worker has been the extension of the Agricultural worker, someone who is directly connected to the 'production' of something necessary to life. They are involved full time in alienation from the way things are and will be, the connection is directly severed.

We see that this could go on and on even further into boredom, but there is an initial problem here that keeps us going down the long, dark path of separation and makes us isolated beings in a time of mass overpopulation, crowding and high technology. We've become walking ads for the life that is sold to us at an hourly wage, and yet we can be 'happy' about it while every single one of us requires some kind of drug or escape to make it through each day (even though ways of dropping out are becoming more deadly).

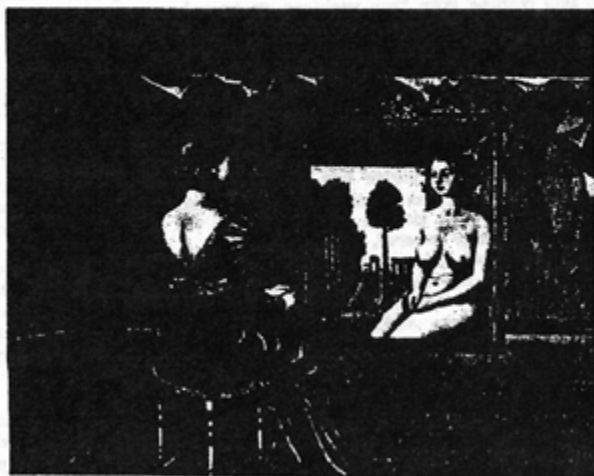
We have moved beyond proletarianization now in the first and second worlds. There is hardly anything left to produce here outside of the spectacle itself. Our purpose here is solely to ensure the 'Progress' of civilization on its path to 'perfection'. This is us, this is now we are homeless and soulless worldwide, similar to the science fiction movie *the Matrix*, we are becoming batteries for the machine to carry on for its own sake. Where is the human in this?

so how does this all fit in with everyday life? All of these notions may seem abstract or like a meaningless mind game, but the reality is that these basic ideas shape our entire perception of the world. It is clear that Civilization is more than just some 'thing' out there: a tangible enemy to be dealt with in physical terms, but an entire system. It has been brought into existence as ideas that have solidified in Symbolic Culture and have become mentalities, Ideology, an entire way of perceiving your Reality: it has become our Reality itself. The concrete formulations can only have come into existence through the spreading of this warped relation to each other and the world: it has separated us from everything that we are, and this is what we are up against when we talk about ending the death trip that our culture has brought about.

For these reasons, it seems imperative that we address the issue directly and try and find a way to overcome our complete alienation and rediscover our being. Only when this is done can we come together as complete beings and bring ourselves back to a complete world. But this is all part of a great process, the only way to liberate ourselves from our domestication is to understand what it is that is keeping us back, and that digging will only come through revolt against the domesticating force of Civilization, within ourselves and what is being imposed on us. The true revolution begins with the insurrection against the mediation and alienation of our being, and this is a battle to be fought on every front, with this we seek to understand what we are up against.

So I ask again, what does it mean to be human? This is something that can only be lived, not told. The greatest journey of life is to realize your being. The answer comes in the form of experience which shows that there are no answers, what we will find is that our questions are over-looking the real world that lies before our eyes. The original question posed here isn't rhetorical, nor is it a simple question, it is a beginning point and all of us must start there if we hope to ever live fully.

This is only one step in a long path. The institutions of power carry much strength because they have possessed so many. In this late hour, our options are becoming clearer. We can either accept full automation and continue the symbolic life or we can try and find our way to an unmediated reality. The implications of this are to be lived and the revolt against Reason implants the seed of insurrection. Our option is to fight against the system of domestication so that we may arise as full beings. That choice is yours to enact upon.



destruction of the existing structure of society. But, to take an example, feminist goals such as equal status for women and an end to rape and domestic abuse are perfectly compatible with the existing structure of society. In fact, realization of these goals would even make the technoidustrial system function more efficiently. The same applies to most other 'activist' goals. Consequently, these goals are reformist.

Among so many other goals, the one truly revolutionary goal - namely, the destruction of the technoidustrial system itself - tends to get lost in the shuffle. For revolution to become a reality, it is necessary that there should emerge a movement that has a distinct identity of its own, and is dedicated solely to eliminating the technosystem. It must not be distracted by reformist goals such as justice for this or that group.

Second, the existing movement is of low effectiveness because too many of the people in the movement are there for the wrong reasons. For some of them, revolution is just a vague and indefinite hope rather than a real and practical goal. Some are concerned more with their own special grievances than with the overall problem of technological civilization. For others, revolution is only a kind of game that they play as an outlet for rebellious impulses. For still others, participation in the movement is an ego-trip. They compete for status, or they write 'analyses' and 'critiques' that serve more to feed their own vanity than to advance the revolutionary cause.

To create an effective revolutionary movement it will be necessary to gather together people for whom revolution is not an abstract theory, a vague fantasy, a mere hope for the indefinite future, or a game played as an outlet for rebellious impulses, but a real, definite, and practical goal to be worked for in a practical way.

¹ "Report on an Investigation of the Peasant Movement in Hunan," in *Selected Readings from the Works of Mao Tse Tung* [Tse-tung], Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1971; page 30.

² As used in this article, the term "revolution" means a radical and rapid collapse of the existing structure of a society, intentionally brought about from within the society rather than by some external factor, and contrary to the will of the dominant classes of the society. An armed rebellion, even one that overthrows a government, is not a revolution in this sense of the word unless it sweeps away the existing structure of the society in which the rebellion occurs.

³ Karl Marx maintained that the means of production constituted the decisive factor in determining the character of a society, but Marx lived in a time when the principal problem to which technology was applied was that of production. Because technology has so brilliantly solved the problem of production, production is no longer the decisive factor. More critical today are other problems to which technology is applied, such as processing of information and the regulation of human behavior (e.g., through propaganda). Thus Marx's conception of the force determining the character of society must be broadened to include all of technology and not just the technology of production. If Marx were alive today he undoubtedly would agree.

integrity of the movement, and proving its courage, are far more important than keeping the goodwill of the general public. The public is fickle, and its goodwill can turn to hostility and back again overnight.

A revolutionary movement needs patience and persistence. It may have to wait several decades before the occasion for revolution arrives, and during those decades it has to occupy itself with preparing the way for revolution. This was what the revolutionary movement in Russia did. Patience and persistence often pay off in the long run, even contrary to all expectation. History provides many examples of seemingly lost causes that won out in the end because of the stubborn persistence of their adherents, their refusal to accept defeat.

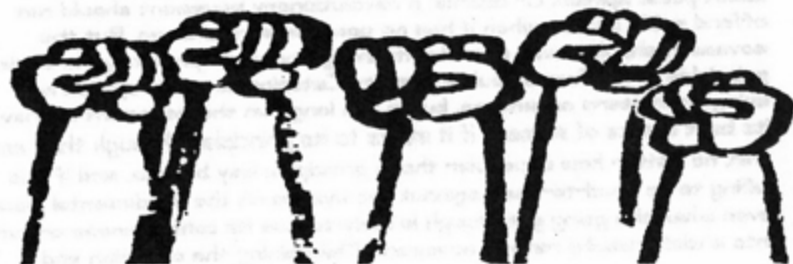
On the other hand, the occasion for revolution may arrive unexpectedly, and a revolutionary movement has to be well prepared in advance to take advantage of the occasion when it does arrive. It is said that the Bolsheviks never expected to see a revolution in their own lifetimes, yet, because their movement was well constituted for decisive action at any time, they were able to make effective use of the unforeseen breakdown of the Tsarist regime and the ensuing chaos.

Above all, a revolutionary movement must have courage. A revolution in the modern world will be no dinner party. It will be deadly and brutal. You can be sure that when the technosystem begins to break down, the result will not be the sudden conversion of the entire human race into flower children. Instead, various groups will compete for power. If the opponents of technology prove toughest, they will be able to assure that the breakdown of the technosystem becomes complete and final. If other group proves tougher, they may be able to salvage the technosystem and get it running again. Thus, an effective revolutionary movement must consist of people who are willing to pay the price that a real revolution demands: they must be ready to face disaster, suffering, and death.

There already is a revolutionary movement of sorts, but it is of low effectiveness.

First, the existing movement is of low effectiveness because it is not focused on a clear definite goal. Instead, it has a hodge-podge of vaguely-defined goals such as an end to "domination", protection of the environment, and "justice" (whatever that means) for women, gays, and animals.

Most of these goals are not even revolutionary ones. As was pointed out at the beginning of this article, a precondition for revolution is the development of values that can be realized only through the



How Santi Helped Me Deconstruct Symbolic Thought

From Disorderly Conduct #5 (see review of #6 for contact info)

"Eeh-eeh...eeh-eeh..."

She answers back, "Eeh-eeh...eeh-eeh..."

I squint my eyes, and she squints hers, we repeat this, vocalize again, and then she comes over to me from under the apple tree and scratches at the post of the deck before rubbing up against me. I sniff her and rub my face against her long white fur, and she pushes her face harder into mine before giving a long yawn and hopping up onto my lap.

It is hard to tell how much of this is learned behavior and how much is unmediated communication between myself and Santolena (Santi for short), the almost eight-year old cat that has been me and my partner's companion for almost all of her life. She was brought to us in San Francisco as a kitten from our friends living in Eugene because the rest of the kittens in her litter had pushed her out, and we were finally in a semi-stable environment and were interested in a feline companion. It was the first cat we ever had a serious relationship with, so there was much to learn. My partner had dogs all of her life, and my father never allowed us to have cats or dogs, but I always felt deeply connected to animals, but not in the domesticated sense. We bonded immediately. I was most happy with the fact that she was not really into people. She is not the kind of cat that likes to be touched, or even approached, by those she does not know well, and is very territorial. We were often criticized by our friends for her scratching and swiping at those who, without her consent, tried to pet her, but we supported her, and she was always sweet with us, except the few occasions when our playing got too rough, or when we tried to take her to the vet (which we soon gave up). She was very happy when we moved to Oregon, and she was able to spend all dry days wondering around the woods around our house. She now had a place to release all of her pent-up wildness and was even becoming a little friendlier to people. She spent her days hunting birds and mice or napping in tall grass, and her evenings snuggling with us. She even seemed to realize the difference between the domesticated realm and the wild, as seen by her playing with the mice who lived in the house, and killing and eating those outside. Needless to say, she gave us great insight into the realm between the domesticated and the wild worlds, which I often feel stuck between.

Although Santi and I have always communicated through vocal and physical means, it was not until more recently that I realized the significance this has had on my life. Even before Santi, I had felt a deep connection to the Earth and her life forms, and felt most at home in wild areas. I have for a long time seen symbolic thought and communication to be a very limited way of thinking and mode of expression. I have for a long time felt that we, as humans, once lived and communi-



coted much differently. I believe that we once depended on instinct and direct experiences much more, and that we have not always needed symbols, or abstract concepts like language to communicate. Our ancient ancestors probably did not say, "I am hurting," but instead expressed their feelings in less mediated ways, much like the sounds and physical expressions we see in animals who are injured. When they felt joy, they probably did not say, "I am happy," but instead laughed, giggled, smiled, or used other less symbolic methods to express themselves. Although we have moved to a more symbolic and abstract way of communicating, there are still some unmediated experiences we still have which offer a glimpse into another way of expression and understanding. One such example are sexual experiences in which no words are needed or even could express the emotions and feelings between people, but more communication can be expressed in a single sexual experience than in a whole library of books. I have learned more about people through other forms of non-verbal communication than through numerous conversations. I have learned more about wild areas through experiencing them directly, then from a biologist explaining the scientific explanations and details to me. This may sound trite, but I feel it is something very important we can all learn to understand, and I believe that communicating and forming bonds with non-humans is an important aspect to this re-learning of our ancestral modes of communication, or our natural expression.

Until Santi, this was more of an intellectual understanding of mine, so she has been fundamental in my true deconstruction of symbolic thought. Not that dissimilar from many indigenous people who are still earth based, and still connected to the plants and animals around them, I have developed a way to communicate with Santi, however limiting and crude it may be, based on a mutual respect and openness. I know when she is hungry or thirsty, she knows when I am sad, I know when she is lonely, she knows when I am angry, I know when she is sick, and she knows when I am scared. She has helped me to more deeply realize the limited nature that the human experience has become, and encouraged me to strive to become wild again.



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new values and spread revolutionary ideas that will encourage active opposition to the technoindustrial system. But spreading ideas, by itself, is not very effective. Consider the response of a person who is exposed to revolutionary ideas. Let's assume that she or he is a thoughtful person who is sickened on hearing or reading of the horrors that technology has in store for the world, but feels stimulated and hopeful on learning that better richer more fulfilling ways of life are possible. What happens next?

Maybe nothing. In order to maintain an interest in revolutionary ideas, people have to have hope that those ideas will actually be put into effect, and they need to have an opportunity to participate personally in carrying out the ideas. If a person who has been exposed to revolutionary ideas is not offered anything practical that she can do against the technosystem, and if nothing significant is going on to keep her hope alive, she will probably lose interest. Additional exposures to the revolutionary message will have less and less effect on her the more times they are repeated, until eventually she becomes completely apathetic and refuses to think any further about the technology problem.

In order to hold people's interest, revolutionaries have to show them that things are happening - significant things - and they have to give people an opportunity to participate actively in working toward revolution. For this reason an effective revolutionary movement is necessary, a movement that is capable of making things happen, and that interested people can join or cooperate with so as to take an active part in preparing the way for revolution. Unless such a movement grows hand-in-hand with the spread of ideas, the ideas will prove relatively useless.

For the present, therefore, the most important task of revolutionaries is to build an effective movement.

The effectiveness of a revolutionary movement is not measured only by the number of people who belong to it. Far more important than the numerical strength of a movement are its cohesiveness, its determination, its commitment to a well-defined goal, its courage, and its stubborn persistence. Possessing these qualities, a surprisingly small number of people can outweigh the vacillating and uncommitted majority. For example, the Bolsheviks were never a numerically large party, yet it was they who determined the course that the Russian Revolution took. (I hasten to add that I am NOT an admirer of the Bolsheviks. To them, human beings were of value only as gears in the technological system. But that doesn't mean we can't learn lessons from the history of Bolshevism.)

An effective revolutionary movement will not worry too much about public opinion. Of course, a revolutionary movement should not offend public opinion when it has no good reason to do so. But the movement should never sacrifice its integrity by compromising its basic principles in the face of public hostility. Catering to public opinion may bring short-term advantage, but in the long run the movement will have its best chance of success if it sticks to its principles through thick and thin, no matter how unpopular those principles may become, and if it is willing to go head-to-head against the system on the fundamental issues even when the going gets tough is likely to lose its cohesiveness or turn into a wishy-washy reform movement. Maintaining the cohesion and

opinion openly, for in those days nearly everyone assumed that only a kook, or maybe a Bible-thumper from the backwoods of Mississippi, could oppose technology. I now know that even at that time there were a few thinkers who wrote critically about technology. But they were so rare and so little heard from that until I was almost thirty years old I never knew that anyone but myself opposed technological progress.

Since then there has been a profound change in attitudes toward technology. Of course, most people in our society don't have an attitude toward technology, because they never bother to think about technology as such. If the advertising industry teaches them to buy some new techno-gizmo, then they will buy it and play with it, but they won't think about it. The change in attitudes toward technology has occurred among the minority of people who think seriously about the society in which they live.

As far as I know, almost the only thinking people who remain enthusiastic about technology are those who stand to profit from it in some way, such as scientists, engineers, corporate executives and the military men. A much larger number of people are cynical about modern society and have lost faith in its institutions. They no longer respect a political system in which the most despicable candidates can be successfully sold to the public through sophisticated propaganda techniques. They are contemptuous of an electronic entertainment industry that feeds us garbage. They know that school children are being drugged (with Ritalin, etc.) to keep them docile in the classroom, they know that species are becoming extinct at an abnormal rate, that environmental catastrophe is a very real possibility, and that technology is driving us all into the unknown at reckless speed, with consequences that may be utterly disastrous. But, because they have no hope that the technological juggernaut can be stopped, they have grown apathetic. They simply accept technological progress and its consequences as unavoidable evils, and they try not to think about the future.

But at the same time there are growing numbers of people, especially young people, who are willing to face squarely the appalling character of what the techno-industrial system is doing to the world. They are prepared to reject the values of the technoindustrial system and replace them with opposing values. They are willing to dispense with the physical security and comfort, the Disney-like toys and the easy solutions to all problems that technology provides. They don't need the kind of status that comes from owning more and better material goods than one's neighbor does. In place of these spiritually empty values they are ready to embrace a lifestyle of moderation that rejects the obscene level of consumption that characterizes the technoindustrial way of life; they are capable of opting for courage and independence in place of modern man's cowardly servitude; and above all they are prepared to discard the technological ideal of human control over nature and replace it with reverence for the totality of all life on Earth - free and wild as it was created through hundreds of millions of years of evolution.

How can we use this change of attitude to lay the foundation for a revolution?

One of our tasks, obviously, is to help promote the growth of the



WRITING OUR FATE

"Language at this juncture becomes the representation of representation, in hieroglyphic and ideographic writing and then in phonetic alphabetic writing. The progress of symbolization, from the symbolizing of words, to that of syllables, and finally to letters in an alphabet, imposed an increasingly irresistible sense of order and control. And in the refraction that writing permits, language is no longer tied to a speaking subject or community of discourse, but creates an autonomous field from which every subject can be absent."

-John Zerzan, 'Language: Origin and Meaning,' *Elements of Refusal*

When you arrive at language, there is the possibility of some free flow, of using something to represent what you think or what you feel. There is something that is contextual, something tied to a certain people in a certain place and time. It has the potential to be intimate and meaningful. However, when that language is written, it is robbed of all of this. The poetic flow of words and meaning are debased: they no longer mean what you are directly saying; they are referring to that text, that type, that style. It has moved beyond the sphere of direct relations.

Communication is a very complicated thing. What symbolic culture has taught us is that the medium is only the way a message is sent. Things are chopped up and served to the recipient as though the art of expression was an assembly line. Civilization has sought to kill off meaning and honesty. Our relations are based off the medium of symbolic culture.

When we tell stories or share emotions, we are not just encoding a message to be decoded by a certain recipient. This is what we have been taught to believe, and our training has been in suit with such. We are, ideally, sharing experience and relating on the level of one being to another. We appeal to what we have in common, which would generally be our place: the bioregion that sustains us and the life that enhances our own.

Language is a single aspect of this telling, it is a series of grunts and noises that hold meaning within those we are closest to. Those series of noises convey a sentiment that has a deep antihistory within our beings: a relation known only to us. The rest of this message is through the non-verbal expression: the way of the animal, that which has been suppressed by civilization.

Nonverbal expression is something that is generally lost to us. We get certain feelings from others when they speak directly to us (a dying mode of expression in the age of mega technology), but this is instructive: what Reason has been trying to destroy. You see, our bodies are speaking along with the reverberations that occur within our throats and mouths. Our eyes are looking through our recollections, our bodies recreating the stories, our spirit is moving between the dream time of thought and the presence of existence, our face is telling our reactions to what the mind is conjuring up. All of this is taken in and related to what the other being experiences, breathes, feels, drinks, and dreams.

Symbolic culture has much to lose from this kind of communication, because it cannot be built upon, it cannot be the basis for deceit and destruction. The lie is the art of faceless communication, and for all realistic reasons, what other reason would there be for the creation of other means of relating experience?

It should be no surprise that there is now a science to 'relaying and receiving messages,' that is the field of human cognition. The complicated process of experiencing has

been treated as it was meant to upon the creation of new ways of perceiving written language. That is, it has been dissected, mystified, demystified, charted, explained, theorized, debated; it's been taken for an immense ride, and one that we may not soon recover. With this, as with everything, Science and Reason have taken something that we do and removed all that is sacred. It has decontextualized and, therefore, ravaged all meaning and sincerity of communication.

Science has flattened our world view, exchanging self in place for self in controlled environment, looking at direct, use-value relationships. It begs the questions of life as it pulls itself from the very community of life. It seeks answers from flow charts, pie graphs, tests, scientific methods, when the real answer comes in the form of being, not 'knowing'. Cognition has been a great step towards the cyborgization of the human animal; it seeks finally bridge the gap between human and machine. It does so by following the strict pattern of symbolic culture.

The role of writing and science in symbolic culture are very similar. You take something that is everywhere before our eyes, every bit a part of our lives; and plage it. That is to say, everything that is inherent to its being is pulled out and thrown onto the table. The sacred has been killed. The blatantly obvious has been decontextualized and put into a theory. We gut our being, therefore we are alienated: the results are in the form of dissertations and ground breaking bits of evidence that prove the superiority from the eyes of the 'beholder.' It's one giant 'fools' game.

What possible reason is there for what we have done with all of this? We need to ask ourselves what is the role that each of these aspects is playing. The answers to these questions may unravel a huge web of perception that has clogged our relations to the world and each other, that has made the allowance for us to destroy and plage and ideologically justify an increasing separation towards an isolated, mechanical future. Think about what our relationships really are, that is as the human animal. Now look again at the future that symbolic culture has been showing us: that matrix of planned consciousness, a mechanical utopia. What does it mean to be the human animal and what is being taken from us?

If Newton had not 'discovered' the law of gravity, would things just float or fall according to random patterns? If your family, those closest to you could not be equated in number form, would they mean less? The questions seem ridiculous, but they only show something more insane: that is the culture that puts such 'intellectual pursuits' above the knowledge of person, place and being.

I ask again, what does it mean to be the human animal?

In the following essays, David Abram shows the effects of written language upon our perception of our world and our relations. Giving us insight as to what Chellis Glendinning calls the primal matrix versus symbolic culture. This is insight to the trappings of the world that places value on such things as written language: the art of the conqueror.

The Abstraction of Space and Time

As the technology of writing encounters and spreads through a previously oral culture, the felt power and personality of particular places begins to fade. For the stories that express and embody that power are gradually recorded in writing. Writing down oral stories renders them separable, for the first time, from the actual places where the events in those stories occurred. The tales can now be carried elsewhere; they can be read in distant cities or even



THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION

by Niktó

'A revolution is not a dinner party...'
-Mao Zedong'

A great revolution is brewing. What this means is that the necessary preconditions for revolution are being created. Whether the revolution will become a reality will depend on the courage, determination, persistence, and effectiveness of the revolutionaries.

The necessary preconditions for revolution¹ are these: There must be a strong development of values of the dominant classes in society, and the realization of the new values must be impossible without a collapse of the existing structure of society.

When these conditions are present, there arises an irreconcilable conflict between the new values and the values that are necessary for the maintenance of the existing structure. The tension between the two systems of values grows and can be resolved only through the eventual defeat of one of the two. If the new system of values is vigorous enough, it will prove victorious and the existing structure of society will be destroyed.

This is the way in which the two greatest revolutions of modern times - the French and Russian Revolutions - came about. Just such a conflict of values is building up in our society today. If the conflict becomes sufficiently intense, it will lead to the greatest revolution that the world has ever seen.

The central structure of modern society, the key element on which everything else depends, is technology. Technology is the principal factor determining the way in which modern people live and is the decisive force in modern history. This is the expressed opinion of various learned thinkers², and I doubt that many serious historians could be found who would venture to disagree with it. However, you don't have to rely on learned opinions to realize that technology is the decisive factor in the modern world. Just look around you and you can see it yourself. Despite the vast differences that formerly existed between the cultures of the various industrialized countries, all of these countries are now converging rapidly toward a common culture and a common way of life, and they are doing so because of their common technology.

Because technology is the central structure of modern society - the structure on which everything else depends - the strong development of values totally inconsistent with the needs of the technological system would fulfill the preconditions for revolution. This kind of development is taking place right now.

Fifty years ago, when I was a kid, warm approval or even enthusiasm for technology were almost universal. By 1962 I had become hostile toward technology myself, but I wouldn't have dared to express that

HERE IS THAT TAKING OUT THE POWER DEHABILITATED THE FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE, OPENING UP A FRAMEWORK FOR REVOLUTIONARY POTENTIAL.

IF THERE WAS A LARGE ENOUGH EFFORT, CONTINUED ATTACKS WOULD ESSENTIAL DECAPITATE THE TECHNOLOGICAL SYSTEM. ELECTRICITY IS THE LIFE BLOOD OF MODERN CIVILIZATION, AND A HISTORICAL LOOK AT THESE ACTIONS SEEMS TO SHOW THAT THEY COULD HAVE CONTINUED THEIR EFFORTS AND CAUSED MORE PERMANENT DAMAGE.

TO LOOK A LITTLE CLOSER TO HOME JOHN ZERZAN OFFERS A LOOK AT THE REVOLUTIONARY SURGE THAT CAN BE AWAKEN VIA THE NEW YORK BLACKOUT OF 1977.¹¹ HE POINTS TO THE LOOTING AND STREET PARTIES THAT TRANSCENDED RACIAL AND SEX LINES AS THOSE WHO HAD NOTHING ELSE TO LOOSE BROKE FREE DURING A PERIOD OF ANONYMITY. THE DRIVES OF PEOPLE INTO THE STREET THAT WERE IN THAT MOMENT, "UNMEDIATED/UN-IDEOLOGIZED HAVE ALL THE PIGS SCARED SHITLESS." IMAGINE GLOBAL BLACKOUT.

AND WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IN THE MEAN TIME? PEOPLE CAN ONLY LIVE OFF CANNED FOODS FOR SO LONG BEFORE PEOPLE ARE FORCED TO TRY AND DEAL WITH THE SITUATION OR GO DOWN WITH THE SHIP. THERE WILL BE OTHER ISSUES AS WELL, AND PEOPLE WILL BE FORCED TO QUESTION THEIR DEPENDENCY UPON THE TECHNOLOGICAL SYSTEM AS CARS AND BUSES ARE INOPERABLE. IN A BRIEF PERIOD OF NO ELECTRICITY, IT IS POSSIBLE TO TAKE THAT OPPORTUNITY TO AWAKEN PEOPLE TO THE COMPLETE INSANITY OF THE MECHANIC SPEED OF TECHNOLOGICAL SOCIETY. THE LITERAL POWERLESSNESS OF THE STATE OPENS UP ALL KINDS OF REVOLUTIONARY POSSIBILITIES FOR ACTION. THE MORE THE STATE FOCUSES ITS EFFORTS ON REESTABLISHING ITS TECHNOCRATIC ORDER, THE MORE OPEN IT REMAINS TO SABOTAGE ON ALL LEVELS.

IS THIS SITUATION NECESSARILY PREFERABLE? COMPARED TO WITH THE OTHER POSSIBILITIES WE FACE (I.E. NUCLEAR WAR) AND THE INEVITABILITY OF COLLAPSE, WHO WOULDN'T WANT TO MAKE A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE OF IT? IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT WE AREN'T SO FAR REMOVED FROM A LIFE WITHOUT TECHNOLOGY AND WE ARE STILL FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO HAVE LIVING MEMORIES OF THE 'OLD WAYS'. THE HOLLOW MATERIAL COMFORTS OF SPECTACULARIZED SURVIVAL WILL BE NOTHING WHEN REAL EXPERIENCE AND LIFE ARE TASTED. IF THE CHANCES ARE TAKEN TO EMPOWER PEOPLE WHO KNOWS WHAT COULD HAPPEN. WE SHOULD ALWAYS REMEMBER THAT THINGS GET WORSE BEFORE THEY GET BETTER, BUT WE HAVE THE POTENTIAL WITHIN OUR BEINGS TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS.

THIS ESSAY HAS BEEN QUESTIONS THAT I HAVE BEEN THINKING ABOUT FOR SOME TIME NOW. AN UNDERSTANDING OF OUR SITUATION IS VITAL FOR US TO MOVE FORWARD AND FAR TOO MANY FOLKS ARE STANDING ON THE SIDELINES WAITING FOR SOMETHING TO BE HANDED TO THEM. PERHAPS WHAT WE'RE WAITING FOR WILL BEGIN WHEN WE START TO MAKE IT HAPPEN, AND WHAT BETTER TIME THAN NOW?

AGAIN, THIS IS FAR FROM ANY FINAL COMMENTS ON THE SUBJECT, BUT AN OPENING FOR WHERE THINGS COULD BE GOING. PHILOSOPHICAL OR THEORETICAL IDEAS ABOUT WHEN WOULD BE THE PERFECT TIME FOR SOMETHING TO START AREN'T MAKING THINGS HAPPEN. "ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN", SO WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?



¹¹ 'New York, New York' in *Elements of Refusal*, Columbia: CAL, 1999.

on alien continents. The stories, soon, come to seem independent of any specific locale.

Previously, the power of spoken tales was rooted in the potency of the particular places where their events unfolded. While the recounting of certain stories might be provoked by specific social situations, their instructive value and moral efficacy was often dependent (as we saw with the Western Apache) upon one's visible or sensible contact with the actual sites where those stories took place. Other stories might be provoked by a direct encounter with the species of bird or animal whose exploits figure



prominently in the tales, or with a particular plant just beginning to flower, or by local weather patterns and seasonal changes. In such cases, contact with the regional landscape—and the diverse sites or places within that landscape—was the primary mnemonic trigger of the oral stories, and was thus integral to the preservation of those stories, and of the culture itself.

Once the stories are written down, however, the visible text becomes the primary mnemonic activator of the spoken stories—the inked traces left by the pen as it traverses the page replacing the earthly traces left by the animals, and by one's ancestors, in their interactions with the local land. The places themselves are no longer necessary to the remembrance of the stories, and often come to seem wholly incidental to the tales, the arbitrary backdrops for human events that might just as easily have happened elsewhere. The trans-human, ecological determinants of the originally oral stories are no longer emphasized, and often are written out of the tales entirely. In this manner the stories and myths, as they lose their oral, performative character, forfeit as well their intimate links to the more-than-human earth. And the land itself, stripped of the particularizing stories that once sprouted from every cave and streambed and cluster of trees on its surface, begins to lose its multiplicitous power. The human senses, intercepted by the written word, are no longer gripped and fascinated by the expressive shapes and sounds of particular places. The spirits fall silent. Gradually, the felt primacy of place is forgotten, superseded by a new, abstract notion of "space" as a homogeneous and placeless void.

Of course, many factors other than, but linked to, writing, contributed to the loss of a full and differentiated sense of place. The development of writing in the Middle East, as in China and Mesoamerica, was accompanied by a large increase in the scale of human settlements, as well as by a concomitant growth in the human ability, or willingness, to manipulate and cultivate the earth. Although the earliest shifts from hunting and foraging lifestyles to more sedentary, agricultural modes of subsistence are very ancient, and may have been prompted by climatic changes at the end of the last ice age, once the

agricultural revolution began to accelerate, writing began to play an important role in the stabilization and subsequent spread of the new, sedentary economies. The ability to precisely measure and inventory agricultural surpluses, itself made possible by numerical and linguistic notation, enabled the new, highly centralized cities to survive and perpetuate themselves—especially through times of climatic extremity—and ultimately enabled the commercial trading of surpluses, and the rise of nation-states. The new concentration of persons within permanent towns and cities, and the increased dependence upon the regulation and manipulation of spontaneous natural processes could only intensify the growing estrangement of the human senses from the wild, animate diversity in which those senses had evolved. But my concern in this work is neither with agriculture nor urbanization—the enormous influences of which have been elucidated in numerous volumes—but rather with the curious question of *writing*, that is, with the influence of writing upon the human senses and upon our direct sensorial experience of the earth around us.

We have seen that alphabetic writing functions to undermine the embedded, place-specific character of oral cultures in two distinct but related ways, one basically perceptual, the other primarily linguistic. First, reading and writing, as a highly concentrated form of participation, displaces the older participation between the human senses and the earthly terrain (effectively freeing human intention from the direct dictates of the land). Second, writing down the ancestral stories disengages them from particular places. This double retreat, of the senses and of spoken stories, from the diverse places that had once gripped them, cleared the way for the notion of a pure and featureless "space"—an abstract conception that has nevertheless come to seem, today, more primordial and real than the earthly places in which we remain corporeally embedded.

But if alphabetic writing was an important factor in the emergence of abstract, homogeneous "space," it was no less central to the emergence of abstract, linear "time." To indigenous, oral cultures the ceaseless flux that we call "time" is overwhelmingly cyclical in character. The senses of an oral people are still attuned to the land around them, still conversant with the expressive speech of the winds and the forest birds, still participant with the sensuous cosmos. Time, in such a world, is not separable from the circular life of the sun and moon, from the cycling of the seasons, the death and rebirth of the animals—from the eternal return of the greening earth. According to anthropologist Ake Hultkrantz:

Western time concepts include a beginning and an end; American Indians understand time as an eternally recurring cycle of events and years. Some Indian languages lack terms for the past and the future; everything is resting in the present.

Today it is easy for most of us, living amid the ever-changing constructions of literature, technological civilization, to conceive and even feel behind all the seasonal recurrences in the sensuous terrain, the inexorable thrust of a linear and irreversible time. But for cultures without writing there is simply no separate vantage point from which to view and take note of the subtle mutations and variations in the endless cycles of nature. Those changes that are noticed are often assumed to be part of other, larger cycles. For the overall trajectory of the visible, tangible world—the world disclosed to humankind by our unaided senses—is circular. This, in the words of Hekaka Sapa, or Black Elk, of the Ojibwa Sioux:

Everything the Power of the World does is done in a circle...The Wind, in its greatest power, whirls. Birds make their nests in circles, for theirs is the same religion as ours. The sun comes forth and goes down again in a circle. The moon does the same, and both are round...Even the seasons form a great circle in

problems in the hopes that people will wake up to the reality that we are being forced to face.

Looking at the likelihood of collapse and how this beast will fall, the chance of it being brought down from inside seems to be the best of possibilities. Because of this, an insurrectionary current could be working to hasten that collapse. The most obvious way would be to attack the technological infrastructure. Civilization has an intense level of dependency on electricity and "resources" creating its greatest weakness.

The weakness comes from the fact that what this technological-industrial civilization is built on is limited resources. This means not only limited in future stock, but in present. The coal that fuels plants is brought into all great centers by trains and oil is transported by pipelines and trucks. There is a limited amount of on-

hand fuel
pivot
centers.
weakness
the system
on
for its
people.
order to
itself.
that fuels
comes
and if
plants
produce,
cannot



at all the
power
the
here is that
is dependent
electricity
power over
but also in
sustain
the power
empire
from plants.
those
can't
the empire
use it.

is possible

that if power was knocked out for at least two weeks in this nation civilization would be gone for good here. Civilization lacks the ability to bring itself back up to speed without using the same level of technology that it currently uses. For example, a single power storage house could be brought back online quickly so long as there are other machines there to try and fix the entire set up. But if power is wiped out in every major city and there is no other real options, what are the chances that it could be brought back on.

This has made the power grid a target for revolutionaries. It has long been recognized that general strikes completely stop a nation in its tracks because without product, and thus capital, flow, the lifeblood of the nation is cut off. This is a direct precursor to attacks on the grid, because it is about people recognizing that as the producers state power requires their complacency. The people themselves were the mega-machine as to some degrees they remain although the bulk of work has been automated now. Regardless all machines work with some degree of human interaction and the machines still need some workers to maintain/over see them. The power is still in our hands in this regard.

However, current revolutionary power must transcend a purely proletarian understanding. The technological system has grown immensely and it remains the key to state power. Over the last decades Latin American revolutionary currents have utilized attacks on the grid as one method of insurrection. Although their goal doesn't seem to be the overall elimination of the technological infrastructure, their attacks have utilized its importance. For example, in order to successfully hit city-targets, the insurgents would attack the relatively isolated generators, wiping out electricity long enough to strike the institutions, rob banks, etc. What is important

EVERY WAY? I STAND STRONGLY BY FREDY PERLMAN'S RECOGNITION THAT "ANYTHING CAN HAPPEN". BUT IT'S UP TO US TO ENSURE THAT EVERYTHING IS TRIED.

Is Revolution Possible or Preferable?

WHILE I CAN ONLY PUT SO MUCH FAITH IN THE IDEA, I SEE THAT REVOLUTION IS ENTIRELY POSSIBLE RIGHT NOW. I LOOK AROUND AND I SEE GENERATIONS BEING RAISED IN AN ENTIRELY SYNTHETIC LIFE, AND I THINK OF LAKOTA SIOUX MEDICINE MAN LAME DEER'S ESTIMATION THAT THEY WILL EVENTUALLY WANT TO BE CLOSER TO NATURE, AND I THINK THAT COULD BE TRUE. THERE IS NOTHING LEFT FOR ANYONE HERE, ALL HAS BEEN AUTOMATED, OUTLAWED, TRIVIALIZED, SPECTACULARIZED, AND LIMITED BEFORE IT GOT THE CHANCE TO EXIST. THE YOUTH OF TODAY HAVE NOTHING TO LIVE OR DIE FOR, ONLY TO CONTINUE THE PATH OF SHINY NEW TECHNOLOGIES WHILE THE WORLD SUFFERS. THE PAIN OF THESE YOUTHS POURS OUT AS IT IS SMOOTHERED BY DRUGS, ALCOHOL, TELEVISION, AND ANY OTHER ADDICTION WHICH CAN BE BOUGHT AND SOLD.

AMONG THESE GENERATIONS JUST WASTING AWAY LAYS THAT URGE TO LIVE, ALTHOUGH IT REMAINS COVERED BY ANYTHING THAT COMES ITS WAY. PEOPLE ARE DYING AND KILLING IN ORDER TO FEEL SOMETHING AND THEY HOLD TO THIS WORLD BECAUSE IT IS ALL THAT THEY KNOW. THE SUCCESS OF DOMESTICATION COMES BY KEEPING EVERYONE FROM REALIZING THEIR OWN SACRIFICE IS FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS, IF THIS CAN BE BROKEN, GENERATIONS OF REVOLUTIONARIES EXIST.

THE DIRE SITUATION WE ARE FACED WITH MAKES REVOLUTION ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT. IT'S SCARY TO THINK WHAT SOME PEOPLE ARE CAPABLE OF DOING IF THEY WOULD HAVE POWER IN THEIR OWN HANDS, BUT REVOLUTION IS BOUND TO HAPPEN. THIS MAKES THE IDEA OF IMMEDIATE ACTION SEEM ALL THE MORE REAL, ALTHOUGH IF IT DOES NOT WIPE OUT THE ABILITY OF CIVILIZATION TO CONTINUE ITS KIND OF DOMINATION TO CONTINUE, THERE WILL ONLY BE THE SAME OLD PROBLEMS.

FROM MY INTERACTIONS WITH PEOPLE, NO MATTER HOW MUCH SHIT THEY FACE, THEY ALL KNOW IN SOME WAY THAT CIVILIZATION IS FALLING. THERE IS REALLY NO SECRET ABOUT IT, AND THE TIMES KEEP ON GETTING WORSE. THE PROBLEM HERE IS THAT PEOPLE ARE SO COMPLETELY DISEMPOWERED THAT THEY SEE NO REASON TO TRY AND RESIST. AS MENTIONED IN THE PREVIOUS SECTION, A STRONG INSURRECTIONARY SURGE COULD SERVE AS A KIND OF CATALYST TO REDIRECT ALL THIS RAGE AND URGE FOR LIFE THAT LIES JUST BENEATH THE SURFACE. REVOLUTION ISN'T HANDING LIFE TO PEOPLE, BUT SHOWING THEM THE POSSIBILITIES.

THE TECHNOLOGICAL INFRASTRUCTURE IS A TARGET

THE POSSIBILITIES OF LIVING WILD AND FREE LIE IN THE WEAKNESSES OF THE STATE.¹⁰ I RECOGNIZE THAT THE DIS-EASE OF CAPITAL HAS INFECTED MINDS SO MUCH THAT THEY WOULD RATHER DIE WITH IT THAN GIVE UP ITS MATERIAL COMFORTS. THIS IS THE NATURE OF THE TOTALITY OF CIVILIZED THOUGHT. MANY WILL HOLD DEARLY TO THIS SYSTEM UNTIL THEY RECOGNIZE THAT OTHER WAYS OF LIFE ARE POSSIBLE, THE REVOLUTIONARY/INSURRECTIONARY URGE SHOULD POINT TOWARDS THIS POTENTIAL.

THE OVER-RIDING QUESTION IS WHETHER IT WILL TAKE A CONSCIOUS REVOLUTION OR THE PRECISE ACTS OF SMALL GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS TO FORCE THIS EMPIRE DOWN. THE BULK OF THE U.S. WON'T BE WILLING TO QUESTION THEIR DOMESTICATION UNTIL SHIT GETS SO BAD THAT THEY DON'T HAVE ANY OTHER OPTION. MY INTERESTS ARE IN TRYING TO DRAW A STRAIN BETWEEN THE PROBLEMS THAT WE EACH FACE AND SHOW THE COLLECTIVE ORIGIN OF THOSE

their changing, and always come back again to where they were. The life of a man is a circle from childhood to childhood and so it is in everything where power moves...

THE CURVATURE OF TIME IN ORAL CULTURES IS VERY DIFFICULT TO ARTICULATE ON THE PAGE, FOR IT DEFIES THE LINEARITY OF THE PRINTED LINE. YET TO FULLY ENGAGE, SENSORIALLY, WITH ONE'S EARTHLY SURROUNDINGS IS TO FIND ONESELF IN A WORLD OF CYCLES WITHIN CYCLES WITHIN CYCLES. THE ANCESTRAL STORIES OF AN ORAL CULTURE ARE RECOUNTED AGAIN AND AGAIN—ONLY THIS CAN THEY BE PRESERVED—AND THIS REGULAR, OFTEN PERIODIC REPETITION SERVES TO BIND THE HUMAN COMMUNITY TO THE CEASELESS ROUND DANCE OF THE COSMOS. THE MYTHIC CREATION STORIES OF THESE CULTURES ARE NOT, LIKE WESTERN BIBLICAL ACCOUNTS OF THE WORLD'S CREATION, DESCRIPTIONS OF EVENTS ASSUMED TO HAVE HAPPENED ONLY ONCE IN THE FAR-OFF PAST. RATHER, THE VERY TELLING OF THESE STORIES ACTIVELY PARTICIPATES IN A CREATIVE PROCESS THAT IS FELT TO BE HAPPENING RIGHT NOW, AN ONGOING EMERGENCE WHOSE PERIODIC RENEWAL ACTUALLY REQUIRES SUCH PARTICIPATION. MIRCEA ELIADE, IN HIS IMPORTANT AND ENIGMATIC WORK *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, HAS SHOWN AS WELL AS ANY SCHOLAR THE EXTENT TO WHICH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES INHABIT A CYCLICAL TIME PERIODICALLY REGENERATED THROUGH THE RITUAL REPETITION OF MYTHIC EVENTS. WITHIN "ARCHAIC" CULTURES (ELIADE'S TERM), EVERY EFFECTIVE ACTIVITY—FROM HUNTING, FISHING, AND GATHERING PLANTS, TO WINNING A SEXUAL PARTNER, CONSTRUCTING A HOME, OR GIVING BIRTH—IS THE RECURRENCE OF AN ARCHETYPAL EVENT ENACTED BY ANCESTRAL OR TOTEMIC POWERS IN THE MYTHIC TIMES.

THE MYTHS PRESERVE AND TRANSMIT THE PARADIGMS, THE EXEMPLARY MODELS, FOR ALL THE RESPONSIBLE ACTIVITIES IN WHICH MEN ENGAGE. BY VIRTUE OF THESE PARADIGMATIC MODELS REVEALED TO MEN IN MYTHICAL TIMES, THE COSMOS AND SOCIETY ARE PERIODICALLY REGENERATED.

BY PERFORMING SUCH ACTIVITIES WITH CARE, EMPLOYING THE VERY PHRASES AND GESTURES DISCLOSED IN THE MYTHIC TIME, ONE ACTUALLY BECOMES THE ANCESTRAL BEING, AND THUS REJUVENATES THE EMERGENT ORDER OF THE WORLD (JUST AS THE PITUPI THIEFMAN ON WALKABOUT, WALKING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THIS TOTEM ANCESTOR, IS SINGING THE WORLD ITSELF BACK INTO EXISTENCE).

EVEN HIGHLY UNUSUAL, EXTRAORDINARY EVENTS ARE SPONTANEOUSLY ASSIMILATED TO RECURRENT MYTHIC PROTOTYPES. THUS, CORTÉS'S ARRIVAL ON THE SHORES OF MEXICO IS INTERRUPTED BY THE AZTECS AS THE RETURN OF THE MINOR GOD QUETZALCOATL TO HIS KINGDOM (AN INTERPRETATION INSTANTLY ENCOURAGED AND EXPLOITED BY THE SLY CORTÉS HIMSELF); SIMILARLY CAPTAIN COOK'S ARRIVAL IN HAWAII IS CONTRIVED BY NATIVE HAWAIIANS AS THE RETURN OF THE DEITY LONO. TO ORAL CULTURES, AND EVEN TO A PARTIALLY LITERATE SOCIETY LIKE THE AZTEC (WHOSE LARGELY PICTORIAL WRITING REMAINED PERCEPTUALLY BOUND TO THE VISIBLE FORMS OF SURROUNDING NATURE), HUMAN EVENTS TAKE ON MEANING ONLY TO THE EXTENT THAT THEY CAN BE LOCATED WITHIN A STORIED UNIVERSE THAT CONTINUALLY RETELS ITSELF; UNPRECEDENTED EVENTS, SINGULAR ENCOUNTERS THAT HAVE NO PLACE AMONG THE CYCLIC STORIES, CAN HAVE NO PLACE, EITHER AMONG THE TURNING SEASONS OR THE CYCLES OF EARTH AND SKY. THE MULTIPLE RITUAL ENACTMENTS, THE INITIATORY CEREMONIES, THE ANNUAL SONGS AND DANCES OF THE HUNT AND THE HARVEST—ALL ARE WAYS WHEREBY INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF PLACE ACTIVELY ENGAGE THE RHYTHMS OF THE MORE-THAN-HUMAN COSMOS, AND THUS EMBED THEIR OWN RHYTHMS WITHIN THOSE OF THE VASTER ROUND.

THE ALPHABET OBTUS ALL THIS, IN ORDER TO READ PHONETICALLY, WE MUST DISENGAGE THE SYNÆSTHETIC PARTICIPATION BETWEEN OUR SENSES AND THE ENCOMPASSING EARTH. THE LETTERS OF THE ALPHABET, EACH REFERRING TO A PARTICULAR SOUND OR SOUND-GESTURE OF THE HUMAN MOUTH, BEGIN TO FUNCTION AS MIRRORS REFLECTING US BACK UPON OURSELVES. THEY THUS ESTABLISH A NEW REFLEXIVITY BETWEEN THE HUMAN ORGANISM AND ITS OWN SIGNS, SHORT-CIRCUITING THE SENSORY RECIPROCITY BETWEEN THAT ORGANISM AND THE LAND (THE "REFLECTIVE INTELLECT" IS PRECISELY THIS NEW REFLEXIVE LOOP, THIS NEW "REFLECTION" BETWEEN OURSELVES AND OUR WRITTEN SIGNS). HUMAN ENCOUNTERS AND EVENTS BEGIN TO BECOME

¹⁰ It is important to mention that the focus of this paper has been on the U.S. and Western power, it is because 1) it is where I live 2) I feel that the U.S. is a pivotal point for global power. I feel strongly that if we can collapse the U.S., it will only spur the fall of other co-dependent empires. The same would be true for European powers. This isn't meant to overemphasize U.S. revolutionaries (who need a good kick in the ass) or undercut revolutionaries over the rest of the world, just a contextual point.

interesting in their own right, independent of their relation to natural cycles.

Recording mythic events in writing establishes, as well, a new experience of the permanence, fixity, and unrepeatable quality of those events. Once fixed on the written surface, mythic events are no longer able to shift their form to fit current situations. Current happenings are thus robbed of their mythic, storied resonance; when the myths are written down, contemporary events acquire a naked specificity and uniqueness hitherto unknown. As some of those naked occurrences come to be described or written down, they, too, are thereby fixed in their particularity, and so assume their singular place within the slowly accreting sequence of recorded events. Thus does oral story gradually fade behind the new awareness of an irreversible and rectilinear progression of itemizable events. And historical, linear time becomes apparent.

But now let us step back for a moment. For by discussing in this somewhat cursory manner the influence of alphabetic writing upon the emergence of homogeneous "space" and linear "time," I have perhaps left the impression that space and time were always—for oral peoples as for ourselves—distinguishable dimensions of experience, and that the literate revolution simply altered the experiential character of these two, already distinct, phenomena. In truth, however, the very differentiation of "space" from "time" was itself born of the same perceptual and linguistic changes that we are discussing. For a time that is cyclical, or circular, is just as much spatial as it is temporal.

—pages 183-188 of David Abrams' amazing *The Spell of the Sensuous*

"The very essence of Western European identity involves the assumption that time proceeds in a linear fashion; further it assumes that at a particular point in the unravelling of this sequence, the peoples of Western Europe become the guardians of the world. The same ideology that spared the Crusades, the Age of Exploration, the Age of Imperialism, and the recent crusade against Communism all involve the affirmation that time is peculiarly related to the destiny of the people of Western Europe. And later, of course, the United States."

—Vine Deloria, Jr. *God is Red*

"He [a Creek Indian] immediately took off the saddle and the bridle and threw them at the feet of the American [who had vainly tried to legally steal a horse from the Indian], telling him that he would never wish to use goods which belonged to a thief; that it was no doubt the *Merchaka* [the Creek term for the written word and books] which made them so frivolous and so wicked."

—Donald Grinde and Bruce Johansen citing a French observer at a treaty council from their book, *Eccocide of Native America: Environmental Destruction of Indian Lands and Peoples*.



INSURRECTION REMAINS A TACTIC FOR THOSE WHO SEEK AN OUTLET FOR THEIR RAGE AGAINST THE GREAT DOMESTICATING FORCE. ACTS OF INSURRECTION ARE POWERFUL NOT ONLY IN THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLE, BUT IN THEIR REFUSAL OF THE CIVILIZED CONSCIOUSNESS, A REFUSAL OF THE HAPPINESS AND NICENESS OF CAPITAL.

INSURRECTION BECOMES ALL THE MORE VITAL WHEN CHANNELLED BEYOND THE REALM OF CAPITAL AND TRANSCENDS THE WHOLE OF CIVILIZED RELATIONS. INSURRECTION IS ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL ACTS OF A REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT SINCE IT IS 'PROPAGANDA OF THE DEED'. NOT ONLY IS AN INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP OF PEOPLE BREAKING THE TOTALITY OF CIVILIZED RESTRICTIONS, BUT THEY ARE EMPOWERING OTHERS TO REALIZE THAT THIS IS A POSSIBILITY. THAT ANOTHER WORLD AWAITS IF THEY CHOOSE TO MAKE IT.

HISTORY IS FULL OF EXAMPLES OF INSURRECTIONARY POWER. THE SUCCESS OF A REVOLT WILL DEPEND ON THE ABILITY OF AN INSURRECTION TO SHOW THE WEAKNESSES OF THE STATE. THIS WAS THE CASE WITH CASTRO'S 26 JULIO INSURRECTIONARY ARMY. WHILE THEIR INDIVIDUAL ACTS WERE FAR FROM SUCCESSFUL, THEIR CONTINUED RESISTANCE WAS AN INSPIRATION. AFTER FAILED DIRECT ASSAULTS UPON PARTS OF STATE POWER, THEY REMAINED IN HIDING ON THE PERIPHERY OF CUBA WITH GROWING SUPPORT. THE CUBAN REVOLUTION HAD LESS TO DO WITH A CONSTANT STRUGGLE BY THE 26 JULIO ARMY, BUT BY THOSE WITHIN THE GRIPS OF STATE POWER RISING UP AT THE SAME TIME AFTER THE POTENTIAL FOR REVOLT WAS BECOMING APPARENT.

AGAIN, THIS IS AN EXAMPLE OF SEIZURE OF POWER, BUT IT WAS ALL THERE IF ONLY THEY WOULD HAVE TAKEN THE FURTHER STEP AND MOVED AGAINST POWER. THE FAILURE OF CUBAN REVOLT WAS IN THEIR DEPENDENCE UPON EXISTING POWER STRUCTURES. SEEING THEIR ONLY WAY TO CONTINUE EXISTING WAS TO CONTINUE PLUGGING IN TO THE WORLD ADDICTION TO SUGAR (THEIR PRIME CASH CROP) AND UNDER THE BANNER OF NATIONALISM PEOPLE CONTINUED SACRIFICING THEIR LIVES TO 'THEIR NATION'. THE POTENTIAL FOR THE ABOLITION OF POWER IS STILL THERE, IT JUST NEEDS TO BE ACTUALIZED.

THERE IS LITTLE SIGN OF A REVOLUTIONARY CONSCIOUSNESS AGAINST THE WHOLE OF CIVILIZATION RIGHT NOW, ALTHOUGH, AS SHOWN ABOVE, THERE IS EVERY REASON TO BELIEVE THAT THIS WOULD BE MOST POSSIBLE RIGHT NOW. ALMOST ALL PAST REVOLUTIONS BECAME POSSIBLE THROUGH THE EXISTENCE OF GUERRILLA/INSURGENT ARMY/FORCES. ONCE THE GROUND



WORK HAS BEEN LAID, IT BECOMES MORE POSSIBLE FOR OTHERS TO SEE THAT THERE ARE OTHER OPTIONS THAN THE FUTURE LAID OUT BY THE DOMESTICATORS.

IT IS ALWAYS TAKING A RISE BY BEING INVOLVED IN INSURRECTIONARY ACTS OF REVOLT, BUT THIS IS A QUESTION OF HOW SERIOUS ARE WE? IF WE ARE SERIOUS ABOUT ABOLISHING THIS NARROW REALITY, THEN WHAT IS KEEPING US FROM TRYING TO REALIZE THIS? WE'LL NEVER BE SURE IF REVOLUTION WILL BE WHAT TAKES THIS DOWN, OR IF INSURRECTION NECESSARILY SPURS INDIVIDUALS TO QUESTION THEIR DOMESTICATION. BUT I KNOW THAT MY INTERESTS LIE IN BEING A FREE AND FULL HUMAN. EVEN IF ALL ELSE FAILS, INSURRECTION IS AT LEAST TAKING STEPS TOWARDS THIS. MY QUESTION IS THAT IF COLLAPSE OR DEATH IS INEVITABLE, WHAT IS THE HARM IN AT LEAST PUTTING EFFORTS INTO TRYING TO TEAR THIS FUCKER DOWN IN

WITH A COMMON GOAL (AS I FEEL 'THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION' ASPIRES). TYPICALLY, THIS 'COMMON GOAL' HAS BEEN ORGANIZED ALONG THE LINES OF THE LOWEST COMMON DENOMINATOR OF WHAT PEOPLE MIGHT WANT. THE RESULT OF THIS IS A LARGER MASS OF PEOPLE, BUT YOU HAVE ALL PEOPLE READING INTO THE 'PARTY LINE' OR IDEOLOGY, WHAT THEY WANT OUT OF IT. WHEN YOU HAVE IDEOLOGY, YOU HAVE SOMETHING WHICH USES A SPECIFIC AGENDA AND PLAN FOR ACTION IN ORDER TO SEIZE POWER. THE OUTCOME OF THESE MOVEMENTS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FAILURE. THIS APPLIES TO THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION, IN WHICH PEOPLE WOULD BE PROPPED UP UNDER THE SAME BANNER OF 'NATIONALISM' AND WOULD ONLY BE SELF SERVING ONCE IN POWER, CAUSING A REVOLVING DOOR OF POWER AND ENSUING USE OF MILITARY FORCE TO CRUSH THOSE WHO HELPED BRING THEM TO THAT POSITION. THIS WAS THE CASE WITH THE SPANISH REVOLUTION AS WELL.

MY INTERESTS AREN'T IN FORMING SOME KIND OF MASS IDEOLOGY OR FOR SOME MASS CHANGE-OVER IN CONSCIOUSNESS. FROM WHAT I'VE SEEN FROM PAST REVOLTS, THE DENIAL OF THE INDIVIDUAL TO THE 'WILL OF THE PEOPLE' HAS ONLY CREATED SOULLESS REVOLUTIONARIES. THE SUCCESS OF CIVILIZATION HAS BEEN IN THE SUBJUGATION OF PEOPLES. SUCCESSFUL REVOLT WILL ONLY COME THROUGH THEIR COMPLETE LIBERATION. MY UNDERSTANDING OF PAST REVOLUTIONS IS ESSENTIALLY ONE OF COMPROMISE, AND THIS IS AN UNFAVORABLE ASPECT THAT I'VE SKIPPED OVER SO FAR. WHILE REALIZING THE POTENTIAL FOR REVOLUTION, WE SHOULD KEEP IN MIND WHETHER OR NOT ONE IS EVEN DESIRABLE. IN ORDER TO ADDRESS THIS IT'S IMPORTANT TO TAKE A STEP BACK AND TO LOOK AT WHAT IS BEING DEALT WITH.

THE REVOLUTION THAT I'M INTERESTED IN ISN'T USING PROPAGANDA TO CREATE A ZOMBIE ARMY OF THOSE SACRIFICING THEMSELVES SO THEY CAN PERPETUATE THEIR OWN SLAVERY. MY INTERESTS LIE IN BRINGING ABOUT A SITUATION WHERE PEOPLE CAN REALIZE THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, AS I SPOKE OF EARLIER. AM I PUSHING MY INTERESTS UPON PEOPLE? PERHAPS IF I WAS INTO MOVEMENT BUILDING, BUT THIS IS FAR FROM WHERE I'M HEADING.

'ROAD TO REVOLUTION' IS A MOVEMENT BUILDING ARTICLE, WHICH ADDRESSES IMPORTANT QUESTIONS OF REVOLUTIONARY DISCIPLINE, BUT THE METHODOLOGY IS NOT ADDRESSING THE INTERNALIZED TECHNOLOGICAL STRUCTURES. A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE WILL ONLY BE VIABLE IF IT IS MADE UP OF INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE COLLECTED ON THEIR OWN TERMS.

I'M NOT FOR ANY KIND OF 'MASS CONSCIOUSNESS' OR MASS ANYTHING, IN FACT, 'MASS' IS ONE OF THE UNDERLYING PROBLEMS THAT COMES WITH CIVILIZATION. I'M MOST INTERESTED IN AUTONOMOUS RESISTANCE. THE PRIMACY IN THIS ESSAY ON THE PRECONDITIONS FOR REVOLUTION IS MERELY AN ESTIMATION OF THE SITUATION WE NOW FACE. FRANKLY, I FEEL THAT WE ARE SEEING THE FINAL DAYS OF CIVILIZATION AND COLLAPSE IS INEVITABLE. HOWEVER, THE WAY THAT THIS BEAST FALLS REMAINS UP IN THE AIR. IT MOST DEFINITELY WILL FALL, BUT WHETHER IT IS FROM WITHIN OR FROM OUTSIDE OR BOTH IS UP TO US TO DETERMINE.

THE DAYS OF THE CONCRETE REALITY THAT WE EXIST IN ARE NUMBERED. MOVING FROM THIS WILL BE THE ACT OF BEINGS SEEKING A TRUE CONNECTION TO THE EARTH AND EACH OTHER; OTHERWISE IT WILL NEVER BE COMPLETELY OBLITERATED. IT IS VITAL TO REALIZE THAT REVOLUTION IS NOT AN ACT, BUT A PROCESS. WHILE IT IS PRIMARILY A MASS UPRISING AGAINST AN EXISTING ORDER, IT HISTORICALLY REMAINS AS THE RECONSTRUCTION OF RELATIONS. I'M INTERESTED IN TRYING TO DRAW ON THE ECOLOGICAL AND EVOLUTIONARY UNDERSTANDING OF THE HUMAN-ANIMAL AS AN IMAGE OF WHAT THESE RELATIONS LOOK LIKE. AND YET, I'M INTERESTED IN TRYING TO MAKE THIS MOVE WITHOUT IDEOLOGICAL RESTRAINTS. I'M NOT HERE TO PROVIDE ANSWERS, ONLY TO OPEN QUESTIONS AND POSSIBILITIES.

THE ROLE OF INSURRECTION

AT THIS POINT, IT BECOMES VITAL TO SPEAK OF INSURRECTION AND GUERRILLA WARFARE. INSURRECTION IS THE ACT OF PEOPLE WHO SIMPLY REFUSE TO SIT BY AND WAIT FOR REVOLUTIONS. HOWEVER, LIKE REVOLUTION, INSURRECTION HAS ITS HISTORY OF USE BY THOSE WHO WOULD RATHER CONTROL THEIR OWN DOMESTICATION RATHER THAN THOSE WHO DESIRE AUTONOMY. REGARDLESS, IT IS IMPORTANT TO FOCUS ON ITS USE FOR THE PURPOSE OF LIBERATION.



history against
being

"Reduced to blank slates by school, we cannot know what it was to grow up heirs to thousands of generations of vision, insight, experience. We cannot know what it was to learn to hear the plants grow, and to feel the growth.

We cannot know what it was to feel the seed in the womb and learn to feel the seed in earth's womb, to feel as Earth feels, and at last to abandon oneself and let Earth possess one, to become Earth, to become the first mother of all life. We're truly poor. Thousands of generations of vision, insight and experience have been erased.

Instead of abandoning ourselves, instead of savoring what little we can of their powers, we define and categorize."

-Fredy Perlman, *Against His-story, Against Leviathan*

"If historical consciousness is finally transformed into psychoanalytical consciousness, the grip of the dead hand of the past on life in the present would be loosened, and Man would be ready to live instead of making history, to enjoy instead of paying back old scores and debts, and to enter that state of Being which was the goal of his Becoming."

-Norman Brown, *Life Against Death: the Psychoanalytic Meaning of History*

The fallacy and importance of History in civilization is as showing of the separation between our true selves and civilized 'life' that symbolic culture creates as one could imagine. As Paul Shepard shows over the next pages, History is the replacement of our being, in a holistic sense. Part of being the human-animal is the entire sense of self, the continuation of life through the constant teaching and learning of whole peoples. Our lives are shaped by what comes to us from generations of living as a part of the world: the wildness, the under-standing, the recognition of place and self. This is imperative to continued existence.

Civilization has been successful insofar that it has created and upheld this separation of our true being and the domesticated. Every aspect of our lives has been replaced by the respective aspect of the oppressor, what is more efficient in prolonging an insane and systematic death. History has been pushed in the void of societal perpetuation, effectively severing the knowledge of life and of being for the now written lessons of conquest and destruction.

The texts of boasts by those who followed their self-fulfilled prophecies of social Darwinism are pushed down the throats of those yearning for self and place. The place in our hearts where the roles of hundreds of fauna, flora, and communities were is now filled with nightmares of what has been done to bring us to and protect

our "way of life." The power of the written word killing and enslaving today as surely as the weapons of mass destruction that poured the blood onto those very pages.

The problems of History seem to be more of existence than what is correct. It's not enough to produce more books which proclaim to have the correct version, so long as the atrocities continue. The important lessons of History lie in the art of oral anti-History that pass through the voices and lives of those who have been under attack from symbolic culture. Our lessons should be learned from those and from a reconnection to wildness. A relationship that shares its knowledge through direct experience, a condition of being that allows us to carry out our own stories.

When we should be learning how to exist and develop, we are crammed into boxes in boxes (schools) to learn how to count the amount of hours we do X amount of labor, and how to equate that to X amount of income, and how to most efficiently meter out that amount into a consumer haven of debt and servitude to our 'Heritage'. Slaves to the symbolic culture fed the aggression of our parents for having never known their true selves. This is the fate of the cycle of alienation, from our true being, from our anti-historical societies.

This is symbolic culture perpetuating itself for the sake of Progress against the will of our selves to become full. The costs of this need little imagination. History is the product of a forced misconception of collective consciousness, the myth to destroy all other myths, used only as a threat and coercion.

This is our chance to escape the fate of the repetitive race of complete destruction. History is only doomed to repeat itself as long as those repeating it have been a part of the process. As with any other trauma, we inflict what we learn, and the cycle only stops when the circle of destruction is broken.

The following is an excerpt from Paul Shepard's amazing essay, *A Post-Historic Primitivism*. Unfortunately, we aren't able to run the entire piece, but we highly recommend reading it from the anthology *Limited Wants, Unlimited Means*, edited by John Gowdy (Island Press, 1998). Paul Shepard was, by far, one of the most insightful thinkers of modern times, and we can't recommend his work enough.

A Post-Historic Primitivism by Paul Shepard

1. The Problem of Relevance of the Past

History as a Different Consciousness

H.J. Muller's classic *The Uses of the Past: Profiles of Former Societies* presented us with a paradox: "our age is notorious for its want of piety or sense of the past.... Our age is nevertheless more historically minded than any previous age."

Two decades later, with the publication of Herbert Schneidau's *Sacred Discontent*, the paradox vanished in a radical new insight. For Schneidau History was not simply a chronicle, nor even an "interpretation," but a new way of perceiving reality, one that set out to oppose and destroy the vision which preceded it. It does not refer to readers' understanding but to a cognitive style.

History, he said, is the view of the world from the outside. It was "invented" by early Hebrews who took their own alienation as the touchstone of humankind. Especially did they conceive themselves as outside the earth-centered belief systems of the great valley civilizations of their time. Central to those beliefs was a cyclic

SEEMS THERE WOULD BE PLENTY OF NATIONS WITH INTEREST IN KEEPING IT FROM COMING BACK. THESE ARE ALL THINGS TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION, ALBEIT IT THEY ARE ALL TAKING CHANCES, BUT HOW LONG ARE WE TO SIT AND WAIT?

SO FAR, THIS EXAMINATION HAS BEEN REGARDING REVOLUTION, BUT IT SHOULD BE SAID THAT THESE SAME PRINCIPLES WOULD APPLY EQUALLY FOR INSURRECTIONS OR GUERRILLA WARFARE. THE CONNECTION WILL BE DEALT WITH FURTHER IN COMING SECTIONS.

SEIZURE OR ABOLITION OF STATE POWER

AS AN ANARCHIST, IT'S EASY TO SEE WHY THE PAST REVOLUTIONS HAVE FAILED TO PRODUCE ANY MORE DESIRABLE REALITY. AS WAS MENTIONED EARLIER, THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE ENTIRE TERMINOLOGY OF REVOLUTION IN THE PAST CENTURIES HAS REVOLVED AROUND CAPITAL. CAMATTE (1996) EXTENDS ON THE DEFINITION OF CAPITAL TO INCLUDE THE ENTIRE MODE OF PRODUCTION AND ITS VALUES. IN THIS RESPECT, CAPITALISM AND COMMUNISM DIFFER ONLY IN THEIR METHODS OF PURSUIT OF CAPITAL. THROUGH THIS VISION, HUMANS ARE REDUCED TO CAPITAL, OR PROLETARIANIZED, MEANING VALUED ONLY BY THEIR POTENTIAL AS LABOR.

PAST REVOLUTIONS HAVE TYPICALLY BEEN CARRIED OUT WITHIN THIS REALM OF CAPITAL. THESE REVOLUTIONS HAVE BEEN THE FORBEARERS OF MODERNIZATION, AND THEREFORE HAVE SOUGHT TO ONLY BECOME THEIR OWN SLAVE DRIVERS. CAMATTE CONTINUES, "LIBERATION BEGINS WITH THE REFUSAL TO PERCEIVE ONESELF IN TERMS OF THE CATEGORIES OF CAPITAL, NAMELY AS PROLETARIAN, AS MEMBER OF THE NEW MIDDLE CLASS, CAPITALIST, ETC."⁸

TO CONTINUE THE PROCESS THAT CAMATTE HAS STARTED, IT IS NECESSARY TO FOLLOW HIS UNDERSTANDING OF CAPITAL AS THE DOMESTICATOR TO THE VERY SOURCE OF DOMESTICATION, CIVILIZATION. IN THIS WE FIND THAT DOMESTICATION COMES HAND IN HAND WITH AGRICULTURE/DIVISION OF LABOR WHICH IS THE ORIGINS OF PROPERTY AND THUS THE STATE.⁹

FROM THIS POINT, WE ARE IN A CLEARER STANCE TO UNDERSTAND THE FAILURES OF PAST REVOLUTIONS. THE SOURCE OF OPPRESSION LIES IN POWER ITSELF, NOT IN WHO HOLDS IT. IN ORDER TO LIBERATE ONESELF FROM THESE MEANS, IT IS NECESSARY TO DESTROY POWER IN ALL RESPECTS. SO REVOLUTION WOULD ENTAIL THE ABOLITION OF POWER, WHEREAS IN THE PAST IT HAS ONLY MEANT ITS SEIZURE AND REDISTRIBUTION.

THIS POINT IS VITAL TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF RELATIONS. I BELIEVE THAT HUMANS ARE INHERENTLY 'GOOD' BEINGS, BUT POWER CORRUPTS ABSOLUTELY. IT DOESN'T MATTER THE INTENTIONS OF WHO IS CHASING IT, ONCE THEY HAVE IT, THEIR WILL IS TESTED BY THEIR ABILITY. IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE POWER TAKES OVER AND THE EARTH AND ALL LIFE BECOME MERE PAWNS FOR THE INTERESTS OF POWER.

PAST REVOLUTIONS HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT BY THE MEANS OF A MASS POSSESSED BY THE PROPAGANDA OF COLLECTIVITY, NATIONALISM AND SO ON. THIS PROPAGANDA REMAINS HOLLOW WORDS ONCE THE POWER HAS BEEN SEIZED. THE PEOPLE'S FAITH IS PUT ENTIRELY ON SOME OBSCURE IDEOLOGY OR PARTY LINE. THE POTENTIAL FOR LIBERATION LIES NOT IN THE ABILITY TO MANIPULATE THE MASSES INTO SOME SACRIFICE FOR THE 'COMMON GOOD', BUT IN THE REALIZATION OF A WAY OF LIFE THAT ENABLES ALL LIFE TO REALIZE AUTONOMY AND SELF-DETERMINATION.

THIS BRINGS US TO A QUESTION OF THE 'MOVEMENT' AND INTERESTS OF REVOLUTION.

MASS MOVEMENT OR AUTONOMOUS RESISTANCE

THE TALK OF REVOLUTION IS GENERALLY IMPLYING THAT IT IS IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THOSE WITHIN THE GIVEN SYSTEM. REVOLUTION IS WIDELY ACKNOWLEDGED AS A MASS-BASED UPRISING

⁸ Camatte, Jacques, *This World We Must Leave*, page 68.

⁹ This is essentially the bottom line of the anarcho-primitivist critique of civilization. More on this critique in this issue of Species Traitor as well as the work of John Zerzan and his 'origins' essays.

WHAT MORE COULD QUALIFY AS 'STATE CRISIS' THAN THE MOUNTING WAR EFFORTS? THIS WAR, THE PRODUCT OF CIVILIZATION RUNNING ON EMPTINESS (LITERALLY), IS THE OUTCOME OF ABUSING AND DESTROYING THE EARTH AND THE RELATIONS OF ALL LIFE. THE POWERFUL ARE GRABBING FOR THE LAST DROPS OF OIL, AIR, WATER, AND SOIL TO BUY AND SELL. WE ARE SEEING THE PROCESS OF COLLAPSE (ECOLOGICAL AND CIVIL), BUT THIS TIME ON A GLOBAL SCALE. THE MOUNTING SITUATION (WHICH WILL BE DEALT WITH IN FURTHER DETAIL IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF SPECIES TRAITOR) IS POSSIBLY A LOOK AT THE END OF CIVILIZATION.

THIS SITUATION REALLY DOESN'T NEED A LOT OF ELABORATION. THE KIND OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INSTABILITY OCCURRING HERE AND NOW IS A HUGE CRISIS, AND WE'RE LIKELY TO SEE THE WORST OUTCOMES FOR IT. THERE IS REALLY NO TIME BETTER THAN NOW TO ATTACK THE SYSTEM WHILE IT'S AT ITS WEAKEST (DESPITE ITS ILLUSIONS, MARSHAL LAW IS A HEAVY POTENTIAL, BUT WE RISK IT EITHER WAY).

WHAT I'M INTERESTED IN POINTING TO HERE IS THE POSSIBILITIES THAT ARE OPENING UP WHILE THE STATE IS PREOCCUPIED WITH ITSELF. ALL THE MAJOR REVOLUTIONS HAVE TAKEN PLACE AS STATE CRISES HAVE WEAKENED THE POWER STRUCTURE. IT IS AT THESE POINTS THAT THE STATES' CONTROL IS HEAVILY FOCUSED ON ONE ISSUE ONLY. WHILE THE MILITARY IS OFF IN FOREIGN LANDS, THE STATE IS LEFT WITH THE SECURITY THAT THE TOTALITY AND OVERBEARING NATIONALISM WILL KEEP US HERE AT HOME FROM QUESTIONING WHAT'S GOING ON, OR RISING UP TO SERIOUSLY CONTEST TO ITS ACTION. THE SIMPLEST POSSIBILITY IS USUALLY THE ONE RIGHT BEFORE YOU.

WORLD PERMISSIVENESS OR GLOBAL PREOCCUPATION

THE 'WORLD PERMISSIVENESS' FACTOR IS ALWAYS PROBLEMATIC. ONLY IN RIGHTIST/STATIST 'REVOLUTIONS' (COUPS) HAVE THE MAJOR WORLD POWERS BEEN THERE TO WATCH OVER OR TURN THE OTHER CHEEK. IN ALL OTHER CASES, THIS REMAINS A SERIOUS FACTOR. NO OTHER MAJOR WORLD POWER HAS INTEREST IN A TRADE OF HANDS UNLESS THERE IS

AN ECONOMIC INCENTIVE FOR THEM TO DO SO (I.E. THE NEW POWERS WILL OFFER TRADE DEALS, ETC.).

IT IS POSSIBLE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY FORCE TO BE SUCCESSFUL WHILE UNDER THIS THREAT. THE CUBAN REVOLUTIONARY ARMY WAS ABLE TO DEFEAT THE US BACKED ATTACKS AFTER THE REVOLUTION. BUT PLANNING IS A MAJOR FACTOR. THE MEXICAN REVOLUTION WAS ABLE TO SUCCEED BECAUSE IT OCCURRED DURING WORLD WAR I WHILE THE U.S. (WHO HAD IMMENSE ECONOMIC INTEREST IN MEXICO) WAS PREOCCUPIED.

THESE ARE THINGS TO TAKE INTO CONSIDERATION. WE HAVE TO LOOK AT THE WORLD SITUATION AS THINGS ARE AND AS THEY ARE HEADING. THE U.S. IS HEADING TOWARDS WAR WITH NORTH KOREA AND IRAQ, ON TOP OF THE 'WAR ON TERRORISM'. THESE TWO FRONTS DEFINITELY REQUIRE THE BULK OF U.S. ARMED FORCES, WHOSE DEPLOYMENT IS ALREADY UNDERWAY. NORTH KOREA HAS THREATENED WORLD WAR III IF THE U.S. ATTACKS, EVEN THOUGH THE POSSIBILITY HAS ALREADY EXISTED. WITH THE U.S. SPREAD OUT SO THINLY, THINGS ARE STILL RELATIVELY OPEN HERE. THERE IS THE CHANCE OF GLOBAL PREOCCUPATION AND IF THE U.S. IS FALLING, IT



return and its paradigmatic and exemplary stories linking past, present, and future with eternal structure. Schneidau calls this the "mythic" way of life. Alternatively, the view created by the Hebrews and later polished by the Greeks and Christians was that time may produce analogies but not a true embeddedness. All important events resulted from the thoughts and actions of a living, distant, unknowable God. There could never be a return. The only thing of which we could be sure is that God would punish those deluded enough to believe in the powers of the mythic earth or who fell away from the worship of himself.

A perspective on Schneidau's concept of pre-history can be gained from recent studies of a style of consciousness among living, non-historical peoples. Dorothy Lee, describing the Trobriand Islanders, refers to the "non-linear codification of reality"; space which is not defined by lines connecting points: a world without tenses or causality in language, where change is not a becoming but a new are-ness; a journey, not a passage through but a revised at-ness. Walter Ong calls it "an event world, signified by sound," a world composed of interiors rather than surfaces, where events are embedded instead of reading like the lines of a book. Of Eskimos, Bogert O'Brien says, "The Inuit does not depend on objects for orientation. One's position in space is fundamentally relational and based upon activity. The clues are not objects of analysis.... The relational manner of orienting is a profoundly different way of interpreting space. First, all of the environment is perceived subjectively as dynamic, experiencing processes.... Secondly, the hunter moves as a participant amidst other participants oriented by the action."

For the Hebrews who invented History, the record of the linear sequence of ever-new events would be the Old Testament. By the time we get to Herbert Muller that record has the density of civilized millennia, and could be projected back upon the whole 5,000 years of written words and such records as archaeology offers.

Muller's paradox, of our obsession with and obliviousness toward history, vanishes because we can begin to understand that the passion is an anxiety with our circumstances and our identity, which only grow thicker, like layers of limestone, as we burrow into that vast accumulation. The hidden truth of history is that the more we know the stranger it all becomes. It is human to want to know ourselves from the past, but History's perspective narrows that identity to portraits, ideology, and abstractions to which nation states committed human purpose. True ancestors are absent. Our search simply sharpens desire.

The meaning of our lives, of nature, of purposeful animals, of simple societies, of everything in this "past," is in doubt. We do not feel our ancestors looking over our shoulders or their lives pressing on our own. The past is the temporal form of a distant place. Our view is that you cannot be in two places or two times at once. I speak of this as a "view" in the sense of Ong's observation that the modern West is hypervisual, and my own conviction that we can see mere "oral tradition" as a nadir from which it was impossible to know that water in time's river runs its course but once and that you can no more recover the primordial sense of earth-linked at-homeness than a waterfall can run backward. And further, once we have shaken off that mythic immersion, and put on the garment of dry History, we are unable to shed the detachment and skepticism that define the Western personality, embodied in the written "dialogues" which Robert Hutchins defined as the central feature of the Western civilization.

History not only envisioned, it created sense of the moment. Its content is sometimes delectable, sometimes horrible, but always irretrievable except as beads on the string from which we now dangle. It deals with an arc of time and of measured

location; its creative principle being external rather than intrinsic to the world; deity as distant, unknowable and arbitrary. Central to History is a subjectivity which also distances us from our ancestors.

The legacy of History with respect to primitive peoples is threefold: (1) primitive life is devoid of admirable qualities, (2) our circumstances render them inappropriate even if admirable, and (3) the matter is moot, as "You cannot go back."

"You can't go back" shelters a number of corollaries. Most of these are physical rationalizations—too many people in the world, too much commitment to technology or its social and economic systems, ethical or moral ideas that make up civilized sensibilities, and the unwillingness of people to surrender to a less interesting, cruder, or more toilsome life, from which time and progress delivered us. This progress is the work of technology. When technology's "side effects" are bad, progress becomes simply "change," which is, by the same rote, "inevitable." Progress is a visible extension of the precognitive habit of History that influences concept and explanation by modulating understanding. It was not only the mathematicians, astronomers, and philosophers of the modern era who gave us the theoretical basis of progress.



All of these objections—and they seem insurmountable—seem to me to imply a deeper mind-set which does not have to do with the content of history. It is more a reflex than a concept. We care little for its theories or inventions since the time of Francis Bacon or for the moods in Christendom which reversed the older view that things only get worse.

Its true genesis lies in the work of Hebrew and Greek demythologizers. They created a reality focused outside the self, one that could be manipulated the way god-the-potter fingered the world. In rooting out the inner-directed, cyclic cosmos of gentiles and naïve barbarians, they destroyed the spiraled form of myth with its rituals of eternal return, its mimetic means of transmitting values and ideas, its role in providing exemplary models, its central metaphor of nature and culture, and most of all as a way of comprehending the past. It began the deconstruction of the empirical wisdom of earlier peoples, and culminated in the monumental Western view of reality whose central theme was the outwardness of nature.

Along with pictorial space and Euclidean time goes the phonetic alphabet as inadvertent "causes" of estrangement. But these are not simply inventions of the post-

THE BREEDING GROUNDS FOR REVOLUTION OPEN UP. THE QUESTION REMAINS, WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH THIS OPENING SPACE?

Tired of Repression?

THE FACTOR OF 'UNIFYING MOTIVE' HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE MOST COMPLICATED. THE REASON FOR THIS IS SIMPLE: THE CITY AND ITS COUNTERPART, THE COUNTRYSIDE, LIMIT HUMAN AND ECOLOGICAL SANITY. WE HAVE BEEN RAISED AS DEPENDENTS OF THIS SYSTEM AND IN SO, ONLY SO MANY ARE READY TO TURN ELSEWHERE. BUT THIS OPENS UP A FAR MORE SERIOUS PROBLEM: WHERE ARE PEOPLE LOOKING?

IN MY EYES, THIS PROBLEM HAS BEEN THE FATAL FLAW OF ALL PAST REVOLUTIONS (SEE 'SEIZURE OR ABOLITION OF STATE POWER' SECTION). THE MOST DIVISIVE FACTOR IN THIS SOCIETY IS THE CAPITALIST MYTH THAT WE CAN ALL GET A PIECE OF THE PIE IF WE JUST TRY HARDER AND THAT THIS WOULD BE DESIRABLE.

WE ARE OBVIOUS TO THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS PLASTIC AND METAL REALITY BECAUSE OUR EYES ARE GLUED ON THE PRIZE: THE CONSTANTLY RAISING CEILING OF WEALTH. A FRIEND, ALEXSA, POINTS TO WHAT THIS ALL BOILS DOWN TO:

BOTH THE FUCKED AND THE FUCKERS HAVE 1) THE SAME IDEA OF LIFE, 2) THE SAME IDEOLOGY OF NEEDS, 3) THE SAME ATTITUDE OF THE WHOLE NON-HUMAN WORLD. BOTH CLASSES BELIEVE IN PROGRESS, IN FURTHER "DEVELOPMENT OF PRODUCTIVE FORCES" AS THE ONLY RATIONAL ANSWER TO THE DISASTER CAUSED WITH ALL PERVERSE "DEVELOPMENTS OF PRODUCTIVE FORCES". THEY DREAM ABOUT THE SAME COMMODITIES, SAME PARADISE.⁶

SO LONG AS WE HAVE BEEN EMBODIED BY CAPITAL (THE WORLD OF COMMODITY, WORK, AND DEVELOPMENT), WE WILL IGNORE THE PATH OF CIVILIZATION THAT IS AT WORK HERE: SLAVERY AND SACRIFICE TO SOME OTHER 'GREAT' ORDER.

AS JACQUES CAMATTE POINTED OUT, A SUCCESSFUL REVOLUTION WILL BRING ABOUT A NEW MODE OF LIFE, NOT A NEW MODE OF PRODUCTION.⁷ THE GOAL HERE IN FINDING A 'UNIFYING MOTIVE' WOULD HAVE TO LIE IN AWAKENING THE 'WANDERING HUMANITY' TO THE REALITY OF THEIR DOMESTICATION.

IT SEEMS THAT A SERIOUS AND FULL REVOLUTION WILL OCCUR ONCE THE PEOPLE REALIZE THEIR DESIRES AND POTENTIAL WITHIN THE REALM OF FULL COMMUNITIES. FULL COMMUNITIES, HOWEVER, CAN NOT EXIST SO LONG AS CIVILIZATION, THE COMBINATION OF INSTITUTIONALIZED DIVISION OF LABOR, ALIENATION, AND HIERARCHICAL, SYSTEMIC POWER WHICH REQUIRES A CONSTANTLY GROWING 'RESOURCE POOL' TO CONTINUE EXISTING, HAUNTS THEM. CIVILIZATION MUST CONSTANTLY EXPAND TO CONTINUE EXISTING, AND ITS POWER LIES IN AN INTERNALIZED TOTALITY (SYMBOLIC CULTURE) AND EXTERNAL INSTITUTIONS/POWERS. ANY THREAT TO THE WELL BEING OF ITS TOTALITY (WEB OF ILLUSIONS, MORALITY, ETC.), IS A THREAT TO CIVILIZATION, AND THREATS ARE MET WITH REPRESSION OR DESTRUCTION. SO THE GOAL IS NEITHER FULLY MENTAL NOR PHYSICAL BUT AN ASSAULT ON ALL FRONTS.

THIS ISN'T MEANING THAT PEOPLE SHOULD BE UNIFIED TOWARDS A SINGLE GOAL OR SOCIETY, BUT UNDER THE PRINCIPLE OF AUTONOMY AND REALIZING THEIR OWN SELF-DETERMINATION. THIS ISN'T A PRESCRIPTION FOR MASS SOCIETY, BUT IT IS THE ONE THING THAT WE ALL HAVE IN COMMON: WE ARE ALL SLAVES TO THE WILL OF CIVILIZATION SO LONG AS IT EXISTS.

WE RETURN TO THE 'MASS DISSENT' MENTIONED EARLIER. PERHAPS THE 'UNIFYING MOTIVE' IS A CHANNELING OF THE RAGE AND MISERY THAT LIES BENEATH THE FACADE OF HAPPINESS AND SUCCESS. PERHAPS A REALIZATION OF THIS UNDERLYING FACTOR WILL AWAKEN REVOLUTIONARIES FROM THE CIVILIZED SLEEP OF THE WORK-CONSUME-DIE REALITY.

⁶ Aleksa, personal correspondence, Jan. 2003.

⁷ Camatte, Jacques, *This World We Must Leave*. Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 1995.

LEISURE, AND DECIMATED OUR SEXUAL LIVES. AND SO IT HAS MADE US LIKE THE LIVING DEAD - DEAD TO NATURE, DEAD TO EACH OTHER, DEAD TO OURSELVES (pg. 130).3

WE'VE BEEN DOMESTICATED TO A NEW WORLD ORDER OF LIFELESS SERVITUDE, OBSESSED WITH A MACHINE-RUN FUTURE. ALL THE EVENTS IN OUR LIFE THAT GIVE US MEANING HAVE BEEN AUTOMATED AND WE ARE LEFT AS THE MECHANICS FOR THE MACHINE THAT WILL DEVOUR OR BORE US TO DEATH.

WHAT WE ARE SEEING IN OUR SOCIETY ARE THE MANY FORMS OF "SURVIVAL SICKNESS" THAT RAUL VANEIGEM SPOKE OF.4 A RAGE AND MISERY SWEEPS OVER SOCIETY IN A SPURGE OF HAPPINESS AND 'NICENESS'. EVERYWHERE IN THIS SOCIETY IS THE BIG SMILEY FACE OF HYPER CAPITALISM TO SOOTHE ALL THE UNREST AND DYSFUNCTION. JOHN ZERZAN NOTES THAT THE "FACE OF DOMINATION IS OFTEN A SMILING ONE,"5 AS A SURREAL WAVE OF ETIQUETTE WIPES OUT ALL DIRECT FLOWS OF RAGE AND CONTEMPT.

WE ARE IN A SOCIETY OF POTENTIAL PSYCHOPATHS WHO ARE CONTINUOUSLY SETTLING UP RAGE. OUR DOMESTICATION TEACHES US TO INTERNALIZE IT, TO 'BITE THE BULLET', AND GO WITH THE FLOW. THE TEACHERS TELL US THAT NOTHING GOOD COMES FROM LETTING IT ALL OUT.

THE YOUTHS ARE GETTING RESTLESS THOUGH. CHILDREN YOUNGER AND YOUNGER ARE HAVING UNCONTROLLABLY VIOLENT OUTBREAKS AND THE ONLY SOLUTION IS TO SEDATE THEM. YET THIS 'SOLUTION' HAS ONLY RESULTED IN MORE INSANE CHEMICAL REACTIONS AND WE AREN'T SEEING ANY HALT TO THE SPORADIC EPISODES OF YOUTH MURDER. BUT IS THIS JUST PUSHING A BUTTON, OR IS THERE SOMETHING HERE? IT SEEMS THAT WE ARE ALL SUFFERING, WE ALL LIVE IN DISNEYLAND AND COLUMBINE AT THE SAME TIME. POINTING OUT THIS DOWNWARD SPIRAL ISN'T JUST LISTING OFF THE 'WORST' OF WHAT HAPPENS, BUT SHOWING HOW COMMON THIS HAS BECOME, AND THAT IT IS EVERYWHERE AND IT IS ALL OF US.

THE 'MASS DISSENT' THAT FIRES REVOLUTIONS IS HERE BUT THE SPECTACLE HAS KEPT THEM AS ISOLATED OUTBREAKS AND INCIDENTS AND AS GROUP THERAPY AND PERSONAL PROBLEMS. OUR RAGE IS COLLECTIVE, BUT WE HAVE BEEN SO HEAVILY DOMESTICATED TO IGNORE IT OR PUSH IT ASIDE. PERHAPS THE KEY TO UNLOCKING AND CHANNELING THIS DISSENT IS TO REALIZE THAT WE ARE NOT ALONE IN OUR MISERY AND THAT IT HAS A COMMON SOURCE. WE HAVE ENOUGH RAGE BURNING US INSIDE THAT WE COULD TEAR THIS SHIT DOWN TONIGHT.

SURREAL POWER GAMES

THE RECENT CORPORATE/POLITICAL TURNS OF DOWNFALLS AND WHISTLE BLOWING ONLY ADDS TO THE SURREAL REALITY THAT HAS BEEN CRAFTED. WHEN WE SEE TOP POLITICIANS AND OTHER FUCKERS TURNING ON EACH OTHER, WE HAVE TO WONDER WHAT'S GOING ON.

THE MORE I'VE LEARNED OF EVERY ONE OF THESE FUCKERS, THE MORE CLEAR IT REMAINS THAT THEY ARE NO LONGER HUMANS. THE SEED OF POWER CORRUPTS ABSOLUTELY AND IT CORRUPTS TO DEATH, AND ALL OF THESE POWER MONGERS ARE INFESTED BEYOND RETURN. THEY ARE ALL GUILTY OF THE CRIMES THAT THEY HAVE DEFINED, BUT WHEN THEY TURN ON EACH OTHER, WHAT DOES THAT SAY?

IN THE PAST YEARS THERE HAS BEEN AN INCREASING AMOUNT OF UNREST AMONG THE ELITES. THEY ARE GETTING BLOODTHIRSTY AND THE RESULTS ARE JUST ALL THE MORE ENTERTAINING. I REALLY HAVE NO INTEREST IN SEEING ANY OF THESE BASTARDS COME OUT 'ON TOP', BUT I DON'T MIND THEM ELIMINATING THEMSELVES, ALTHOUGH THE RESULT IS ONLY INCREASED POWER HOLDINGS. BUT THIS IS JUST CAPITALISM PLAYING ITSELF OUT.

REGARDLESS OF WHATEVER THE BACKGROUND OF THESE ODD TURNS MAY BE, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THERE IS MASSIVE 'ELITE DISSENT'. THE POWER MONGERS ARE SHAKING THINGS UP, AND WHEN THE CRADLE ROCKS, THE CRADLE WILL FALL. WHILE THE ELITES PLAY POWER GAMES,

medieval West. They are markers in the way the world is experienced. Their antecedents occur in the Bronze Age Mediterranean where much of what we call "Western" has its roots.

Elsewhere I have tried to describe this history as a crazy idea, fostered not as a concept so much as the socially sanctioned mutilation of childhood, the training ground of perception, by the blocking of what Erik Erikson called "epigenesis." But, whatever it's dynamic, History alters not our interest in the past (witness Muller's observation that we moderns seem more interested than ever), but the work of attention itself, the deep current of precomprehension that runs silently beneath our spoken thoughts.

History and Ambiguity

If we attempt to recover the difficult and "distant" art of tool-flaking we may do so over the objections of modern rationality that denies that the pterodactyl can fly since no one has seen it do so. That is, you cannot know the ancient technique. Not only does History define it as beyond access, but incomprehensible. History thinks its own process is an evolution separating us by our very nature from our past—medieval, Neanderthal or primate.

Central to History is the notion of a fixed essence, an inner state that persists in spite of the contradictions of appearance, that our visible form not only fails to inform but can be made to deceive. Shifting appearance is dangerous, larval forms signify evil. The question of our primate and Neanderthal past cannot be addressed except as alternatives to our present identity. We are predisposed by the immense cultural momentum of History to dismiss such ambiguous assertions as one of a larger class of moot points in which categorical contradiction, the simultaneous reality of two opposing truths about ourselves, is denied.

Equally paradoxical is the matter of being in two times at once, even though our senses tell us that we are not today what we were yesterday. This movement from one state or one thing to another is not so much a problem for human consciousness as for meaning. The liminal or boundary area of categories heightens cognitive intensity. In the historical world, such transformations have been handled by accepting reality as made up of fixed identities, oppositions, and beyond them, transcendent meaning, declaring one of the appearances to be illusory, or by seeing them as good and evil. In all cases except the last the surface or apparent contradictions is cast into doubt in favor of some deeper, hidden, more real reality. Mostly this problem has been met in the West by denying appearance—especially when it shifts or is a larval state—as the true identity and instead postulating essences and spirits within or seeking principles and abstractions as the enduring, unchanging reality, despite outward shape.

In non-Western, non-industrial, and largely non-literate (hence non-historical) societies, external form is dealt with quite differently. Edmund Carpenter cites our difficulty with the visual duck/rabbit pun as our loss of the "multiplicity of thought," a collapse of metaphor in a mind-set related to phonetic writing. A. David Napier has traced the matter in elegant detail in connection with the ritual use of masks as the perceptual means of assenting to a universal principle of shape-shifting. Coupled with dance, this is humankind's central means of reconciliation with a world of changes. The many shapes in such masked dances testify also to a world in which abstractions are given lively form. Ahistorical peoples usually live in worlds where power is plural, as in egalitarian small societies in which leadership is not monopolized but changing and dispersed. The concrete or given model for this discontinuity of emphatic and exem

³ Evans, Arthur, *Witchcraft and the Gay Counterculture*, Boston: Fag Rag, 1978.

⁴ Vaneigem, Raoul, *Revolution of Everyday Life*, London: Rebel, 2001.

⁵ Zerzan, John, *Future Primitive*, Brooklyn: Autonomedia, 1994. Page 136.

plary qualities is the range of natural species. To varying degrees the animals and plants are regarded as centers, metaphors, and mentors of the different traits, skills, and roles of people. In polytheistic worlds there is omniscience and no single hierarchy, although there may be said to loom a single creative principle behind it all. Insofar as they model diversity and the polytheistic cosmos, the animals provide metaphors of forms and movements that can be brought ceremonially into human presence, as interlocutors of change. Their heads as masks, the animals in such rites become combinational figures created to give palpable expression to transitional states. The animal mask on the body of a person joins in thought that which is otherwise separate, not only representing human change but conceptualizing shared qualities, so that unity in difference and difference in unity can be conceived as an intrinsic truth. And some animals, by their form or habit, are boundary creatures who signify the passages of human life. Finally, in dance these bodies move to deep rhythms that bind the world and bring the humans into mimetic participation with other beings.

The sophisticated Greeks after the time of Pericles ridiculed these predications, and the Jews and Christians rejected them. The thinness of music and dance in temples, churches, and mosques indicates the minimalizing of what was and is basic to hundreds of different, indigenous religions marked by "mythic" imagination.

The nature of the primitive world is at the center of our dilemma about essence, appearance, and change. Since we are not now what we once were—we are not bacteria or quadruped mammals, or apish hominids, or primitive people living without domesticated plants and animals—the dichotomy is clear enough. We each know as adults that we are no longer a child, yet we are not so sure that our being doesn't still embrace that other self who we were. We are attached to that primitive way of understanding, of double being, in spite of our modern perspective. Depth psychology has led us to understand that this going back is going into ourselves, into what, from the civilized historical view, is a "heart of darkness." Clearly a threat of the loss of self-identity is implied, swallowed by a second nature which is hidden and unpredictable.

As born anti-historians, our secret desire is to explicate the inexplicable, to recover that which is said to be denied. It is a yearning, a nostalgia in the bone, an intuition of the self as other selves, perhaps other animals, a shadow of something significant that haunts us, a need for exemplary events as they occur in myth rather than History. If not a necessity, it is a hunger that can be suppressed and distanced. The experience of that past is in terms of something still lived with, like fire, that still draws us. We cannot explain it, but it is there, made fragile in our psyche and hearts, drowned perhaps in our logic, but unquenchable.

It has been said that those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it, and yet by definition cannot be repeated. Presumably such repetition means analogy. One does not really "go back," but merely discovers similar patterns. To ask the question in the perspective of pre-history: what are we to learn from history? The answer: history rejects the ambiguities of overlapping identity, space and time, and creates its own dilemmas of discontent and alienation from Others, from non-human life, primitive ancestors, and tribal peoples. Failing to enact pre-history, we can live only in history, caught between captivity and escape, afflicted with Henry Thoreau's "life of quiet desperation," now called neurosis. Since history began, most people most of the time have lived under tyrants and demagogues (Mr. Progress, Mr. Collectivity, Mr. Centralized Power, Mr. Growthmania, and Mr. Technophilia). No empire lasts, and when states collapse their subjects are enslaved by other states.

Revolution And/Or Insurrection: Some Thoughts on Tearing This Muthafucka Down



DISCLAIMER: "REVOLUTION" IS FOR ENTERTAINMENT AND HISTORICAL REASONS ONLY.

RIGHT NOW, OUR SOCIETY EXHIBITS EVERY MAJOR CHARACTERISTIC NECESSARY FOR REVOLUTION. HISTORIAN JAMES DEFONZO HAS LAID OUT THE COMMON FACTORS WORKING FOR A 'SUCCESSFUL' REVOLUTION! (THOUGH ALL FIVE ARE HARDLY EVER ALL AT WORK AT ONCE): MASS DISSENT, ELITE DISSIDENT, UNIFYING MOTIVE, STATE CRISIS, AND WORLD PERMISSIVENESS². IT TAKES NO PROFESSIONAL OR SPECIALIST TO SEE THE BULK OF THESE FACTORS AT WORK HERE AND NOW.

REVOLUTION IS THE RESPONSE TO A CHANGE IN STANDARDS IN ALMOST ALL CATEGORIES OF SOCIAL LIFE WITHIN A GIVEN SYSTEM. TRADITIONALLY THIS HAS OCCURRED DURING A PERIOD OF MODERNIZATION WHERE THE STATE HAS BEEN A BAR FROM REACHING THE POTENTIAL THAT IT'S 'CITIZENS' FEEL THEY ARE DUE (RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY). THEY OCCUR AT POINTS WHEN SOCIAL STRATIFICATION IS AT AN EXTREME AND THE MASSES ARE INCREASINGLY BEING MARGINALIZED.

THE INTERESTS HERE ARE NOT IN POURING OVER OR DISPUTING THE WORK OF 'EXPERTS' AND 'THEORISTS', BUT TO LOOK AT COMMON ELEMENTS OF REVOLUTION AND OUR SOCIETY AND QUESTION WHAT SOME POSSIBILITIES ARE FOR REVOLUTION OR IF IT'S EVEN DESIRABLE.

(NOTE: THE POINT HERE ISN'T TO REACH SOME 'VANGUARD', 'MOVEMENT', OR 'ORGANIZATION' GOAL, BUT TO LOOK INTO SOME POSSIBILITIES THAT OUR CURRENT SITUATION OPENS UP AND POINT TO THE POSSIBILITIES FOR AUTONOMOUS RESISTANCE.)

NIHILISTIC RAGE

THE 'MASS DISSENT' THAT DEFONZO POINTS TO IS NOT ONLY PRESENT, BUT DEFINING OUR TIMES, ALTHOUGH IT IS CONCEALED UNDER MASS FRUSTRATION OR A NIHILISTIC RAGE. PEOPLE ARE PISSED OFF, AND THEY KNOW IT, BUT THEY DON'T KNOW WHO TO BLAME. EXPERTS AND SPECIALISTS HAVE COME UP WITH MORE THEORIES AND 'SOLUTIONS' TO THIS OCCURRENCE THAN ANY OF US WOULD HAVE ANY INTEREST IN FOLLOWING UP ON. THESE EXPERTS HAVE TYPICALLY AVOIDED THE ISSUE BY MISSING WHAT IS RIGHT IN FRONT OF THEIR EYES: THIS WORLD WE HAVE MADE FOR OURSELVES GIVES US NO REASON TO LIVE AND NO REASON TO DIE.

THIS WORLD OF MEGATECHNOLOGY AND ULTRA-ALIENATION SEEMS TO DESTROY ALL THAT IS HUMAN INSIDE OF US, AS ARTHUR EVANS DESCRIBES IT:

THE WHOLE INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM IS LIKE ONE GREAT NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD WHERE THE ENTIRE POPULACE HAS BEEN REDUCED EMOTIONALLY TO THE LEVEL OF ZOMBIES. IT HAS DEADENED US TO OUR ENVIRONMENT, DEPRIVED US OF ART, STERILIZED OUR ANIMAL NATURE, ROBBED US OF THE SKILLS OF SURVIVAL, DEGRADED OUR LABOR AND

¹ It is important to note that DeFronzo is referring to a more 'traditional' view of revolution as seizure of state power. While the interests here lie in abolition of all power, the same preconditions seem to remain.

² DeFronzo, James, *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements*, Boulder: Westview, 1996.

able to flow with the world and can achieve what we'd hope to get from history and science without subjective implications on the world that we are theorizing about. The problem that is being opened here is getting to there from here. I'm interested in a reawakening of primal consciousness that has been repressed by civilized domestication in order to justify and continue conquest and exploitation. We are constantly up against questions of how can we use these things that shape the civilized reality in order to destroy it. Towards this I can only point to what I think is problematic, in this case being any kind of complete faith in sciences like anthropology and using what speaks to my being without disregarding what I just don't care for.

The point in extending on this discussion is to find a way of using these kinds of findings without using the system that has produced them. I feel that a revolt against civilization will require a revolt against the scientism of civilization (Reason). What Theresa has laid out here is a view from inside the field about what is going on. I don't agree entirely with her view, but I can respect her attempts to overturn from within without preoccupation or delusions of anthropology as the 'wonder science' (as Lévi-Strauss surely would see it). The path to anarchy will require calling into question all of the 'sacred cows' that have laid the path for rational dissent so that we can return to our primal being.



The crucial question of the modern world is, "How are we to become native to this land?" It is a question that history cannot answer, for history is the de-nativizing process. In history "going native" is a madman's costume ball, a child's romp in the attic, a misanthrope's escape.

Unlike History, pre-history does not participate in the dichotomy that divides experience into inherited and acquired. Nor does it imply that our behavior is instinctive rather than learned. It refers us to myths, the exemplifications of the past-in-the-present. Ancestors are the dreamtime ones, and their world is the ground of our being. They are with us still.

The real lesson of history is that it is no guide. By its own definition, History is a declaration of independence from the deep past and its peoples, living and dead, the natural state of being which is outside its own domain. Indeed, History corrupts the imperatives of pre-history. What are the imperatives? What are we to learn from pre-history? Perhaps as Edith Cobb said of childhood, "The purpose is to discover a world the way the world was made."

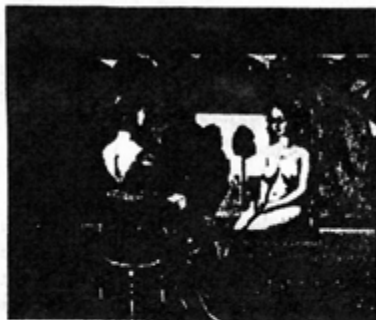
(pages 281-286)

Primitivism does not mean a simplified or more thoughtless way of life but a reciprocity with origins, a recovery misconstrued as inaccessible by the ideology of History. In the latter view one puts on costumes and enacts another culture as the French aristocracy imitated shepherds during the Renaissance or as middle class "dropouts" in the 1960s put on gingham gowns and bib overalls.

From the ahistoric perspective you cannot "go back" to recover "lost" realities, nor can you completely lose them. So long as there is a green earth and other species our wild genome can make and find its place. Like many difficult things the transformation cannot be made solely by acts of will. One can simulate the external features of a primitive life—for example, the limitation of possessions and the non-ownership of the land—but something precedes the outward form and its supporting ideology. That something is the way in which the sensuous apprehension is linked to the conceptual world, the establishment early in life of a mode by which experience and ideas interact, in perception.

It is, of course, a cyclic matter in which childhood experience leads to appropriate thought and custom, which in turn mentors individual genesis. Breaking into the circle is hard, as we urban moderns can only start with an idea of it. Rare are those who can make that leap from the idea to the mode without early shaping. As a result most of us get only glimpses of what we might be were truer to our wildness, among them some of the anthropologists who study tribal peoples. Or, we get intimations from the archetypes arising in our dreams or given in visionary moments.

(page 320)



What this means for the critique of symbolic culture

"What has been called 'History' is nothing but the history of commodities and of human beings who dehumanize themselves to produce them. The triumph of bloodless humanism shows today that economic expansion has been not a victory but, rather, the final blow delivered to the expansion of human life, from which it has parasitically substituted itself."

-Raoul Vaneigem, *The Movement of the Free Spirit*

As has been discussed in the earlier section, Writing Our Fate, civilization is necessarily obsessed with itself. It must wade in the midst of its merciless path: it must proudly wear its soiled armor as a sign of its conquest. What Shepard has exemplified is that History is nothing more than a replacement of our natural anti-histories. He offers a critical look at the role of History and possibilities for moving beyond it.

Our conceptions of History have been most heavily defined by the Judeo-Christian traditions, as Vine Deloria, Jr. points out in *God is Red*:

From the very beginning of the religion [Christianity], it has been the Christian contention that the experiences of humankind could be recorded in a linear fashion, and when this was done, the whole purpose of the creation event became clear, not only explaining the history of human societies but also revealing the nature of the end of the world and the existence of heaven, or a future world, into which the faithful would be welcome.

We all know what History is being talked about here. This is what we had pushed on us by textbooks and teachers in school; this is what our parents and their generations have passed down to us: this is the Western Legacy. And that's what it all comes down to, *legacy*.

Perhaps, the saying 'you are what you eat' what be more appropriate as 'you are what you leave behind.' Of course, in this light we're not talking about what state we leave our world in, or how we are able to care for and bring in the next generations. The civilized understanding is of what material possessions we leave behind, or what it says on a rock above our chemical filled, encased bodies after we die.

What is passed down is nothing of use, but the remains of shattered beings; ghosts of what the human-animal is capable of being, prided on having the longest life expectancy or having it better than anyone else in history. Our concept of history is truly His-story, a myth that the civilized tell themselves so that their servitude can have more meaning. The Past is worse, the Future is glorious, and our lives are sacrifices towards realizing that Future. We look upon the past as though we have achieved something new; new revelations, new ways of doing things, new machines, new beings. In this, we have justified the move-ment towards nothingness. Each new shining toy is a step towards goodness and a page in the history books that we are writing. We have an unhealthy obsession with the abstract, and it all feeds into our overall separation from our being.

Think about what you have learned through your life, what things have been taught to you, what things you have picked up, and so on. All of us could go on and on about it, but how many of us can honestly say that we have learned how to live? Sure, we've learned plenty of ways to sweat it through a job we hate and stretch those 'hard-earned' dollars out to survive, but what do we really know? Our minds

Theresa, something was constantly coming into my mind; that we know that civilization is fucked up and that this is not the way of life that humans have become ecologically evolved into, but how much do we have to constantly reassert it before we do something about it. I'm not accusing these folks of not trying to do something, but I become concerned in general.

Looking into the fields of anthropology, I constantly see people like Boas who are concerned with constantly recording and cataloguing all the problems of civilization. What comes to mind is a photograph from the Vietnam War of three American soldiers raping a Vietnamese woman. The war photographer (as well as the photographer and journalist in general) have made it their work to constantly record the destruction that is occurring, possibly with the hopes that what they have recorded may spur others to action. How much does it take before we stop just recording hoping that someone else will come along before we act? In many ways the anthropologist is just like that war photographer, watching destruction take place right before their eyes and recording it. Perhaps this is the success of domestication in disempowering individuals to feel that they can have no impact on the situation, but my interests remain purely revolutionary. I again am forced to ask what it will take before we stop being mere observers as our home and all life is being destroyed before we do something about it. I feel anthropology can serve as a weapon against the civilized 'reality', but I'm afraid that so long as it remains within scientific understanding it will seek to only make us all participant-observers to destruction.

As Theresa has mentioned, the work of the archaeologists is the business before the bulldozers. This can be a tough situation. Knowing that developers will completely destroy the land without regard would it be doing something positive to try and pull out the pieces of human past that will be plowed away? Can it serve as a kind of deterrent against developers or is a dig just another method of clearing out the land, whether developers follow or not? Most importantly, I'm concerned with finding a way of trying to stop the destruction from the start, and not trying to make the best of a shitty situation.

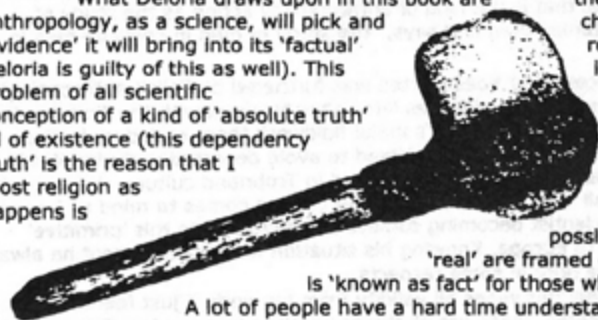
Revolutionary Potential

The work of radical anthropologists like Theresa, Pierre Clastres, Marshall Sahlins, Richard B. Lee, and Stanley Diamond (to name a few) is vital to moving anarchist critique and action. What is being uncovered by anthropology is too valuable to be discarded, and it is inspiring to see people from within these fields realizing the potential influence of their work. However, it is equally important to use that evidence as not just 'findings' and 'evidence'. To move beyond civilization we will need to use this kind of knowledge to reawaken the wildness that sleeps within us. Anthropology will remain vital only so long as it speaks to us and we are able to use it without becoming it.

The exact same applies to history and other sciences. I personally feel that the work of the evolutionary theorists was vital to overthrow the scientific mythology of the religious conquerors. However, as a rewilding human, I'm forced to question the potential of this finding. To what degree is it important that we 'know' the specifics of our entire past? What is important is a mythological (anti-institutionalized) consciousness that enhances who we are within the context of the community of life that we are a part of. The success of civilization exists in reducing our reality to a backdrop of things that we exist apart from.

What I'm referring to above isn't a kind of intentional ignorance or turning the cheek on 'knowledge', but to question what is a part of the human-animal. From my own understanding, a mythic, unwritten view is one that is

What Deloria draws upon in this book are anthropology, as a science, will pick and 'evidence' it will bring into its 'factual' Deloria is guilty of this as well). This problem of all scientific conception of a kind of 'absolute truth' all of existence (this dependency truth' is the reason that I most religion as happens is



the ways in which choose what reality (although is a serious understandings, a which underlies on 'absolute science). What that the possibilities for what is

'real' are framed only within what is 'known as fact' for those who are observing.

A lot of people have a hard time understanding that science is all just theorizing, in this way it becomes only possible to think of people coming into this continent through the Bering Strait. I can't say I take the 'science' side or the 'indigenous' side (since neither really exist), but I think that scientific 'fact' has limited our ability to look to other possibilities.

The problem, as I see it, isn't in trying to figure out what is 'right' or 'wrong' but realizing that a system that carries such values and can impose them upon others is the problem. I, like Theresa, have little interest in battling myths with others, and as I will point to later, feel that a mythic, ecological consciousness is important to rewilding our lives, but I feel that anthropology can be vital only in deconstructing the universalized and institutionalized myths that underlie and maintain civilization.

Cataloguing Conquest

The past of archaeology isn't much different than the rest of anthropology. The kind of observation that Malinowski brought into the fieldwork of anthropology could be said to be the basis of archaeological digs. It wasn't till after Darwin's Descent of Man (1859) that archaeologists would even recognize the past as existing outside the 6,000 year span that the Church allowed since 'creation'. In the new world it wasn't till Boas criticisms came to reshape the way digs were done. Archaeological digs, as we know them now, didn't take their current form till the 1960's through the work of Lewis Binford after the 1947 origin of the Carbon-14 dating technique, explicit use of evolutionary theory, employment of cultural and ecological concepts, and the use of systems theory.

Archaeology is essentially the study of the past through material remains. The work of archaeologists can only really be useful when put into context with how certain remains are used by more recently observed peoples or common usage of similar materials. What archaeology really has to work with is finding the exact location of things in the earth. Their work is to literally dig up the past and theorize on the implications of their findings. In many ways this is working with a huge disadvantage and moving into a lot of speculation, but as Theresa points out, there is a lot that can be learned from this despite the handicap. Some have taken these findings and added to the critique of civilization, such as John Zerzan, Jared Diamond, and Clive Ponting to name only a few.

What I see as problematic here is the actualities of all of this. While I see no point in discrediting the effects of all the collected information that points to the inherent problems of civilization, I do think there may be a point when this becomes self-serving. I'm not interested in ever saying that we should stop looking, but I'm concerned that this search has overcome the possibilities that are being opened up. When I was writing these questions to

are polluted with the seeds of Science and Reason. We have Knowledge of how things work and function, technicalities and so forth. But what do we know of life and being.

Walk into the world around you. Most people in a 'non-civilized' society would be able to drop everything and live on their own. What primitivism has done is contrast the span of civilized life versus the primal, human-animal. We have been searching for some insight as to what it is that has us so emotionally wound up that we are exploding anywhere at anytime, or we're being heavily sedated to control the outbreaks.

There is a definite art to Life, and not something strict or graded, or even anything that could be written down. There is a piece of the world that we fit into as animals, and civilization has attempted to ignore this. The moments of the hunt, the digging in the soil for roots, the gathering of berries, nuts, insects, and so on, all of these things require understanding, not of scientific formulas, but of being and place. The hunter does not check with their schedule to find the right moment to strike; there is a certain understanding, an entire way of existing that one must give into.

All of these acts have been cheapened by civilized experiences: if it isn't done right, try it with more machinery. We do anything to believe that we have that level of control, when we are denying what's right before our eyes. Yet we are blind, and it isn't that we can't see at all. It is that we can only see through symbolic culture. We see a scattered vision of our History, and we see Legacy and Future through that. And in History we trust.

All this, and yet, it is rather easy to step out of it. History is not merely a source on the past, but a totalistic entity. When we stop seeing through the images of History, we are able to break the cycle of predetermined Future and Progress. When we start this, we can begin to make our own stories along the movements of our own being.



SPACE DIVIDED

-Susan Griffin from her book,
Woman and Nature: the Roaring Inside Her

Bring out number, weight and measure in a year of dearth.

William

Blake, *The Proverbs of Hell*

Miletus initiated the practice of the mathematical "plat," based not on topographical reality but on numerical configurations.

Sibyl

Moholy-Nagy, *Matrix of Man*

The mile. The acre. The inch and the foot. The gallon and the ton. The upper and lower, left and right, side, front, back, under, ante, post. The large and the small. Number and name. Perimeter. Classification. Separation. Shape.

Space Divided.



The mile. As in thirty miles north of Oklahoma City (is a plant for the manufacture of plutonium) or six miles west of St. Louis (is the St. Louis Public Zoo) or one mile and a half north of Soledad (lies the Central Facility for Soledad State Prison) or two hundred miles southwest of Berlin (in the district of Bamberg, there once existed a house for the trying of witches) or six miles west of the city of Corona (is the California Institution for Women) or two miles south of Napa (is Napa State Hospital for the mentally ill).

Space. The Acre. For example, 500,000 acres (of the Ozarks have been sprayed with herbicide) or 936 acres (comprise the central facility in Soledad) or 199 acres (are in the California Institute for Women) or 81 acres (are part of the St. Louis Zoo).

Space. The Inch and the Foot. Divided. As in eight foot long (pencil-thin metal rods are used to store the plutonium) or thirteen feet by seven feet by nine feet (is judged the proper size for a cell used for continual separation and solitary confinement) or fourteen to eighteen inches (should be the thickness of the walls dividing cells) or eighteen inches (of stone should separate the cell from the corridor) or five thousand square feet (is the size of a pool accommodating several seals and one sea elephant) or fourteen thousand square feet (are allotted for the primate house) or thirty feet (are needed to widen the public ramp for the lion show).

Divided. The Gallon. The Ton. As in a million and one half gallons (of 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid and 2,4,5-tetrachlorophenoxyacetic acid are stored on Johnston Island) or forty thousand tons (of 2, 4, 5-tetrachlorophenoxyacetic acid were dropped over the Vietnamese countryside) or tons (of toolproof steel were used in the construction of Sing Sing

kind of 'scientific method' that can even begin to bring about what it proposes it will. In this case, that is the field of anthropology acting as the study of humans, or as Stanley Diamond says, "the study of men in crisis by men in crisis."

The process that Boas started was furthered by Polish anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski a few decades later after his work with the Trobrianders of Papua New Guinea. Malinowski's initial fieldwork there ended up lasting longer as he moved onto a remote island to avoid deportation during World War One. Over this period he became immersed in Trobriand culture, defining what he would later call "participant-observation". Duerr comes to mind as I can see Malinowski the scientist becoming somewhat emerged into this 'primitive' society to return to Europe. Knowing his situation wasn't permanent he always had a foot out the door in some respects.

I don't feel this wipes all validity from his work, I just feel that when looking at these cases, these are all things we have to consider. This kind of 'observation' carries with it the scientism of objectivity, believing that the wholeness of a culture can be observed and understood from neutrality. French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss has recognized that while science is still myth, it carries the possibility of finding a 'factual reality'. He states: "Science will never give us all the answers. What we can try to do is to increase very slowly the number and the quality of the answers we are able to give, and this, I think, we can do only through science." 3 Through even this rather liberal assessment we are left with the belief in 'hard facts', and while Lévi-Strauss has denied 'scientism' he has none-the-less carried its underpinnings.

Through this, all of the positive outcomes of anthropology must also be understood in a way that is independent of civilized assertions. What we have seen from the field of anthropology and understanding the problems we face now is that "[f]undamentally we are people of the Pleistocene"4, we are gatherer-hunters. The anarcho-primitivist critique takes this understanding very seriously, meaning that civilization is a recent invention and the effects of domestication are just a sign of our urging to return to the way of life that has shaped our being. With this, there is little reason why we shouldn't uphold this kind of information, because it speaks directly to the repressed gatherer-hunter in all of us civilized peoples. What we should always be wary of is the dry scientism that underlies the specific search that anthropology takes on.

Creating Reality

In his book, *Red Earth, White Lies*, Sioux scholar Vine Deloria Jr. opens up questions about "the myth of scientific fact". His drive in this was to debate the well established theory that Native Americans arrived on this continent by crossing the Bering Strait within the last 20,000 years (one of the more modestly accepted estimates). In the eyes of Deloria and other Native Americans (though not all) this theory, established as 'fact', is racist. I'm concerned in certain ways about validity of some arguments which may be based on 'land claim' issues, which has been an accusation against this particular book. As an anarchist, I feel that nothing makes any specific 'land' someone's 'property', although I understand this kind of legal assertion against governments. Regardless of this possibility, I find that a lot of the arguments are worthy of heavy consideration.

² *Dreamtime: Concerning the Boundary between Wilderness and Civilization*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1985.

³ *Myth and Meaning*, New York: Schocken, 1995, pg. 14.

⁴ Paul Shepard, *The Tender Carnivore and the Sacred Game*, Athens: Georgia UP, 1998, pg. 36.

ANARCHY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

by Kevin Tucker



As Theresa Kintz points out in her interview, anthropology (referring here to the general field that consists of biological/physical anthropology, cultural

anthropology, archaeology, and linguistics), like all sciences, is a tool of the civilized. Radical anthropologist Stanley Diamond has written: "Civilization originates in conquest abroad and repression at home."¹ The role of science has been to justify and perfect that conquest and repression, and anthropology isn't an exception. However, through the work of anthropologists (both unintentionally and intentional) we've come to a greater understanding of the human-animal and the anarchist state we've lived in for over 99% of our existence. We come against the problem of having to work with such tools of the civilizers while trying to destroy the entire mental and physical system that originated it.

Outsiders Looking In and Away

The original anthropologists primarily worked from the accounts of conquistadors, missionaries and travelers bringing back news of the 'savages' beyond the realms of civilization. The two options that the conquerors saw for the 'primitives' was to wipe them out or assimilate them, though as we have historically seen, both have led to similar outcomes. The assimilation was spearheaded by missionaries and those who found these people had more value alive (as labor) than dead, although the two are hardly separable. The hopes of the missionaries would be to pave the way for a 'friendly' relationship and to 'civilize' the 'savages' through their God.

The work of the time would predominately be self-serving accounts of the rise to civilization from 'savagery' and 'barbarism'. The major turn would be with Franz Boas who focused on the need for direct field work around the turn of the century. Boas, a German immigrant to the United States, saw the natives of this country being slaughtered off and fast. His concern was that all of this knowledge would die off with these people and began the turn of anthropological work to recording the entirety of the knowledge being destroyed.

With Boas came the importance of describing and cataloging aspects of people. This kind of approach is work of the scientist. Despite what good intentions Boas and his followers had, their work was entirely subjective. By describing everything that one sees, there is no kind of 'objectivity'. There is only a situation that German philosopher Hans Peter Duerr calls "riding the fence", meaning that there is a person trying to understand one reality to translate it to those in another reality. That person then is stuck in the middle, always a part of one culture and is therefore only capable of observing the other culture through their perceptions. What Duerr points to is that there is no

Prison).

Divided. The Upper and the Lower. At the Side. Under. Left and Right. Ante. Space. As in upper and lower (chapels were in the two-story building) or at the side (was an outbuilding which was the torture chamber) or under (the building ran a stream used for test by immersion) or to the right (of the entrance hall was the warder's room) or to the left and right (of the corridor leading to the chapel opened eight separate cells) or to the right (are the cell blocks and shops for hardened criminals who will not leave their quarters) or on the left (is the hospital for the abnormal) or ante-chambers (for the judges adjoined the chapel) or on the upper story (are cages for lions) or on the lower (are rest rooms for the public) or to the left (of the hospital was the death house).

Space Divided, as in Large and Small. The largest of three (arenas is the chimpanzee show) or the small (mammal house) or a small (room on the upper story called the confession chamber).

Divided. Name. Number. As in the name Hexenhaus (House of the Witches) or the number eighteen (cells and a room for a warder) or twenty-six (witches could be held in the house at any one time).

Divided by Perimeters and Classifications, such as a twelve-foot-high chain-link fence (secured at the bottom to a concrete curb and topped by three strands of barbed wire, with ten armed guard towers, lined in two parallel rows of five) or such as four classes of inmates (800 average, 150 a disciplinary group, 150 defective or abnormal, 400 an honor group) or such as the three classes of animals (Reptiles, Birds, Mammals, Primates) or the three classes of structures needing remodeling (by priority: First Priority, aviary, lion house, seal basin, west parking lot, east refreshment pavilion, et cetera; Second Priority, reptile house, small mammal house, et cetera; Third Priority, primate house, lion show, and so forth).

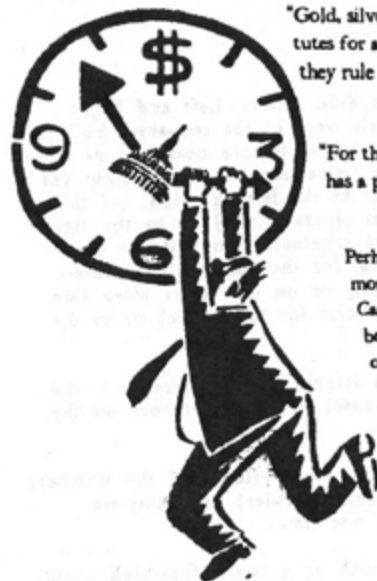
Space Divided by Separations, as in separate corridors (are provided for the guards and the prisoners) or each floor is separated from the other floor, or there are eight separate cell blocks, or the dining room has two separate entrances (so that the classes of inmates may be kept separate) or there are several separate cottages (a cottage for colored girls, a cottage for the younger girls, a cottage for older women, a cottage for women on the honor role, a cottage for women being disciplined, a cottage for the incorrigible), or as in separation is enforced (in the Auburn system by a rule of silence, and because the inmates must keep their eyes downward and walk in lock step).

And finally, the Divisions of Space are seen as Shapes, such as an elliptical arc (forms the outside wall of the upper and lower chapel in the Hexenhaus) or a square (the shape of the lion house) or a circle (the shape for a prison in which there may be a constant surveillance from the center) or such as the rectangular shape of a cell.

Or the shape of a measuring rod.

¹ In *Search of the Primitive*, New Brunswick: Transaction, 1987, pg. 1.

Capital Against Life



"Gold, silver, and stones, like technology, are pathetic substitutes for a lost world, a lost spirit life, and to the extent that they rule a culture we may infer its inmost health."

-Frederick Turner, Beyond Geography

"For the white man each blade of grass or spring of water has a price tag on it."

-John Fire Lame Deer, Lame Deer, Seeker of Visions

Perhaps no other aspect of symbolic culture has been more critiqued and written open than capital. What Camatte shows in the following piece is how capital has become autonomous, that it exists and works because of itself.

Capital has really defined alienation; it is as civilized as anything could possibly be. It is the product of specialization and the division of labor that comes along with the growth into facelessness that accompanies sedentary agrarian societies. As the population expands and as technology progresses, urban centers begin to develop.

As humans move away from the small scale intimate relationships towards large scale half

life, the direct economy has been shattered into a million pieces. There is no individual production or exchange, there are only markets. Into this state, you have capital, the symbolic value placed on your labor.

Capital is nothing more than a symbol, a value set by a society based on exploitation and specialization. But it's not just a thing that represents something else, as any other symbol. The role of capital within symbolic culture is a center piece: our lives dwindle away chasing after it. It becomes our vision, our view of the world.

We see everything in relationship to what it means in use-value terms: what we will get out of each relationship. When we see the world like this, we are near sighted. You see life less as a series of relations and of one great community, and more in what will you get out of this or that now. You sever your life from the community of life. You have left the sphere of existence. This process laid the foundation for our current situation, this is what is put on us, and this is what is in our hands NOW.

It is only through seeing things in direct use-value that we could possibly think about tearing apart mountains, draining the life blood of our home, releasing filth into the skies and waters, pouring carcinogens into our soil, and wantonly destroying those around us. We are killing our very life source, literally and spiritually.

The capitalists cling to their capital as they would have us chase it and create more for themselves. We, as with the rest of our extended, true selves, are a resource pool: we are expendable parts for their dream world. And their own insane will to hold onto their fortunes is showing of our entire condition.

We've heard of their sick attempts to keep their minds physically alive. Severing,

civilization. Here I am one living thing living among other living things. Perhaps in my study of prehistory I find the world I wished I lived in, and I believe I share this feeling with others and seek to communicate with them.

I suppose all activists feel they never do enough, are always looking for more effective ways to fight. What action can I take that would make a difference? One of the things that antagonistic opponents will always say when confronted with AP thought is, "Well, if you really believe people should live that way, why don't you?" My answer has pretty much remained the same for the past two decades - I want to, I will, someday. But for now I feel I have to stay and fight. I feel my own personal escape would be self-serving at this point in time. So I write, I riot, I lecture, I study, I argue about philosophy and politics with friends and enemies, I throw pies at figures of authority and try to support my comrades. I wait and watch for signs that civilization is collapsing and hope, in some small way, I can help give it a push.



society. There are lots of others who have written about this. Zerzan of course, also Mumford and the Frankfurt School philosophers Adorno, Horkheimer and Marcuse. Archaeologists are acutely aware of how technological changes, represented in the archaeological record, precipitate changes in social relationships and human's relationships with the natural world. They write now about the social life of things, how the artifacts themselves are imbued with social meaning.

Mainstream anarchism's reluctance to acknowledge the role of material culture in dictating social relationships is its great downfall. On the road with JZ we've noticed how the anarchists will always come to argue against the AP perspective and in support of the artifacts of civilization - asserting that we can have our cake (electricity, automobiles, computers) and eat it too (a free anarchist society). This is simply not true, the two are mutually exclusive. All the artifacts we surround ourselves with in civilization require division of labor and control, the antithesis of anarchy, control of a complex network of social relationships to manufacture, distribute and maintain them. Someone has to work on the assembly line, sell things to people, drive the trucks, clean up the shit, and, most importantly, perhaps, manage all of this. A free anarchist society is absolutely impossible to achieve in an industrial society. It seems so obvious to me. As long as we hold on to this false idea that we need all of these artifacts we will continue on this socially and environmentally destructive path called civilization.

So archaeology demonstrates we don't need civilization, why do people still cling to it? To me this is perhaps the most important question to explore. How do people become convinced that we need all of this to survive, be happy, lead meaningful lives when the exact opposite is true? My hope is that the work of archaeologists, our knowledge of how all artifacts have politics, how technology influences society, will deconstruct this fundamental notion of the benefits of civilization.

Do you feel that there's a bit of defeatism in archaeology? An understanding that someone is going to dig these up or plow over them, maybe we should try and learn from them or 'preserve' them? Is there an alternative to that take on things?

I have real problems with this, "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" mentality. Joining them is the worst thing we can do. What ends up happening to all this information we are getting paid to preserve? It is a well-known and oft lamented fact that the vast majority of archaeological reports produced will just end up filed in the basements of State Historic Preservation Offices, never seen by anyone again. Technically, the reports are the property of the client and the archaeologists can't release them without the client's permission. Often the clients don't want the fact that they are destroying a community's cultural heritage publicized, so it is a vicious circle. Yes, we are preserving the information, but only a very small portion of the population will ever have a chance to consider it. Archaeologists tend to publish highly technical reports that are inaccessible to the public. All the artifacts will be taken out of the community and put into storage in the basements with the reports.

The work we do is relevant to the present. People find archaeology interesting. When we swoop into a small town rural Kentucky we interact with the locals, check into a motel, go drink in the local bars. Someone will always ask what we are doing there. "We are archaeologists". "Wow, what are you doing here? My grandfather found an arrowhead once down by the creek...there is an old cabin in the woods by my house...what are you finding?" We can't say for sure whether or not making someone aware of the prehistory and history of their community will result in a life changing experience that prompts them to question authority and join the revolution, but the more knowledge people have - about the way things were, and the way things are now, for that matter - the better in my opinion. It gives a sense of perspective that is missed without an understanding of history.

I've always argued that archaeology needs to be more than elites satisfying the intellectual curiosity of other elites. I do archaeology with an overtly political agenda, a radical one. I believe the knowledge produced by archaeologists has revolutionary potential. I use archaeological research to support an argument that an anarchist society is not only possible, but preferable. I use my understanding of the history of civilization to critique it. So I've made a deal with the devil. I work on archaeological sites ahead of development projects, but always with an eye to using this knowledge to subvert the dominant paradigm, to argue for revolutionary social change.

I have a very hard time relating to people who don't give a shit, including other archaeologists. I get angry with those who think it is all just about making a living and finding cool stuff. That's why I write as much about the politics of archaeology as I do green anarchism. I think all archaeologists are potential green anarchists if they would just get over this feeling of disempowerment. Archaeologists are as apathetic as most people, and it is worse for them because they know!

Closing comments

If my study of archaeology is an attempt to better comprehend reality in order to effect change in the world I live in, so far the results have been pretty disappointing. The reality that really speaks to me does not come from intellectual engagement, rather it comes from this place I always come back to, where I am now. What grounds me, what inspires me is hearing the sound of this river in the background, seeing the way the steep, forested mountain looks in sunshine of the fall with the hawk circling against the blue sky, an occasional interaction with fox, elk, bear, deer, chipmunk, squirrel, porcupine, raccoon, possum, or skunk, learning when to plant and harvest my garden, when the blackberries, chestnuts, mushrooms, apples, pears, and grapes are ready for collecting. I look for what is real about the world in nature, where I can connect with what exists beyond the boundaries of

pumping, automating, mechanizing, anything to keep the idea of them around all the longer. They would exist as bodiless heads in cryogenic chambers, as long as they can, and this is what they are doing to us. They have severed our head from our body, and so long as we see through their vision, we lack our true being.

The Wandering of Humanity

by Jacques Camatte

Despotism of Capital

When capital achieves real domination over society, it becomes a material community, overcoming value and the law of value, which survive only as something "overcome." Capital accomplishes this in two ways: 1) the quantity of labor included in the product-capital diminishes enormously (devalorization); 2) the exchange relation tends increasingly to disappear, first from the wage relation, then from all economic transactions. Capital, which originally depended on the wage relation, becomes a despot. When there is value it is assigned by capital.

Capital is capital in process. It acquired this attribute with the rise of fictive capital, when the opposition valorization/devalorization still had meaning, when capital had not yet really overcome the law of value.

Capital in process is capital in constant movement; it capitalizes everything, assimilates everything, and makes it its own substance. Having become autonomous, it is "reified form" in movement. It becomes intangible. It revitalizes its being—that vast metabolism which absorbs ancient exchanges or reduces them to exchanges of a biological type—by despoiling all human beings in their varied activities, however fragmented these may be (this is why capital pushes human beings to engage in the most diverse activities). It is humanity that is exploited. More than ever the expression "exploitation of man by man" becomes repulsive.

In its perfected state, capital is representation. Its rise to this state is due to its anthropomorphization, namely to its capitalization of human beings, and to its supersession of the old general equivalent, gold. Capital needs an ideal representation, since a representation with substance inhibits its process. Gold, if it is not totally demonetized, can no longer play the role of standard. Capitalized human activity becomes the standard of capital, until even this dependence on value and its law being to disappear completely. This presupposes the integration of human beings in the process of capital and the integration of capital in the minds of human beings.

Capital becomes representation through the following historical movement: exchange value becomes autonomous, human beings are expropriated, human activity is reduced to labor, and labor is reduced to abstract labor. This takes place when capital rises on the foundation of the law of value. Capital becomes autonomous by domesticating the human being. After analyzing-dissecting-fragmenting the human being, capital reconstructs the human being as a function of its process. The rupture of the body from the mind made possible the transformation of the mind into a computer which can be programmed by the laws of capital. Precisely because of their mental capacities, human beings are not only enslaved, but turned into willing slaves of capital. What seems like the greatest paradox is that capital itself reintroduces subjectivity, which had been eliminated at the time of the rise of exchange value. All human activity is exploited by capital. We can rephrase Marx's statement, "Labor, by adding a new value to the old one, at the same time maintains and eternalizes [capital]" to say: all human activity "eternalizes" capital.

Capital as representation overcomes the old contradiction between monopoly and competition. Every quantum of capital tends to become a totality; competition operates between the various capitals, each of which tends to become the totality. Production and circulation are unified;

the ancient opposition between use value and exchange value loses its *raison d'être*. Besides, consumption is the utilization of not only material products but mostly representations of value; they become mere indices or signs of representations of capital. Free goods are not impossible. Capital could assign a specific quantity of its products to each programmed individual; this quantity might depend on the required activity imposed on this individual. Such a despotism would be more powerful than the present one. Human beings would wish they had the money that had "given" them free access to the diversity of products.



The autonomy of form affects all aspects of life dominated by capital. Knowledge is valid only if it is formalized, if it is emptied of content. Absolute knowledge is tautology realized; it is dead form deployed over all knowledge. Science sits systematization; epistemology is its redundancy.

In the era of its real domination, capital has run away (as the cyberneticians put it), it has escaped. It is no longer controlled by human beings. (Human beings in the form of proletarians might, at least passively, represent a barrier to capital.) It is no longer limited by nature. Some production processes carried out over periods of time lead to clashes with natural barriers: increase in the number of human beings, destruction of nature, pollution. But these barriers cannot be theoretically regarded as barriers which capital cannot supersede. At present there are three possible courses for the capitalist mode of production (in addition to the destruction of

humanity—a hypothesis that cannot be ignored):

- Complete autonomy of capital: a mechanistic utopia where human beings become simple accessories of an automated system, though still retaining an executive role;
- Mutation of the human being, or rather a change of the species: production of a perfectly programmable being which has lost all the characteristics of the species *Homo sapiens*. This would not require an automated system, since this perfect human being would be made to do whatever is required;
- Generalized lunacy: in the place of human beings, and on the basis of their present limitations, capital realizes everything they desire (normal or abnormal), but human beings cannot find themselves and enjoyment continually lies in the future. The human being is carried off in the runaway of capital, keeps it going.

The result is ultimately the same: the evolution of the human being is frozen, sooner in one case than in another. These possibilities are abstract limits; in reality they tend to unfold simultaneously and in a contradictory manner. To continue on its indefinite course, capital is forced to call on the activity of human beings, to exalt their creativity. And to secure its permanence, capital has to act quickly. It runs into barriers of time and space that are linked to the decrease of natural resources (which cannot all be replaced by synthetic substitutes) and the mad increase of human population (which causes the disappearance of numerous forms of life).

It becomes clear that raising the banner of labor or its abolition remains on the terrain of

You are right, here we are playing by their rules, but as JZ has pointed out, as soon as the use of language became our dominant method of social intercourse we were on the road to symbolic, as opposed to authentic, association. I believe that there is a constant battle going on in our minds and bodies between rationality, as epitomized by the constant intellectualizing of existence that takes place in the realm of language, and real, authentic, sensual experience of each other and the world around us. I know I perceive this personally and I sympathize with your apparent frustration, sometimes the cacophony of voices, of opinions, is overwhelming, disconcerting, better to just act and ask questions later. I know that my inspiration for action comes more from my gut than my mind, I try to make myself trust this facet of my personality more.

In my more cynical moments I worry that my work, my writing might be so much blah, blah, blah. That even having this knowledge of the history of civilization, its costs and consequences, offering cogent arguments against it, producing archaeological evidence to support my conclusions, it is all just talk and wonder if words have the power to change things at all? Like all activist/writers, I imagine, I struggle with trying to find the best way to say things, not wanting to reproduce an ideology or sound dogmatic. Certainly the power of rational, scientific arguments against civilization is limited, the knowledge itself is obviously not enough to produce the desired effect, i.e. the destruction of civilization, or else it would have occurred by now. It takes something more than words. It takes action and part of the way that people arrive at the decision to take action is to have a logically consistent (rational) reasoning for doing so. I wouldn't argue that my desire to see civilization collapse is irrational, but the rational aspects of my motives represent only part of my commitment. My study of archaeology is 'dependable', inasmuch as my search for understanding is an ongoing process that I can always depend on to provide more food for thought.

As I said, I do not see archaeology as an exclusively scientific endeavor. I recognize the political, and even the poetic, aspects of the project of telling the story of humanity. But I do feel compelled to engage my colleagues in a debate about what effects our stories produce, do they support the status quo, the idea that civilization is a 'good' thing? Or does the knowledge we produce have within it the most damning indictment of civilization possible? I keep working because I am convinced archaeological theory and data do provide a foundation on which we can construct a profound and compelling critique that may also be used as a basis for action.

It is undeniable that a good deal of archaeological work has been digging up people's pasts. A great deal of controversy has arisen when there is the often occurrence of archaeologists digging up grave sites and tearing apart sacred areas. At what point should lines be drawn?

I will always side with the wishes of the indigenous people with regard to the treatment of archaeological sites and remains as a matter of principle. The politics of the present take precedence in my mind. I don't like nationalistic tendencies, but I understand the realities of the racist past of anthropology and abhor the ongoing political subjugation and marginalization of indigenous peoples. I can sympathize with all colonized people's desires to assert themselves politically in the present and gain control of their pasts. One interesting exercise I used to do with my students in the UK is ask them to consider how they would feel if Britain had lost WWII, the country occupied and university posts filled by German archaeologists in charge of doing all the archaeology, writing the prehistory and history of England.

Of course, there is no one voice among the Native Americans on this matter so it gets even more complicated. Some Native groups and individuals believe that archaeology shouldn't be done at all, and some run their own archaeological services or work closely with hired CRM archaeologists because they want to know the things archaeology can discover about their past (and this is also an interesting question, whose past is it? It's very difficult to say that a living population's ancestors were the ones who created a 10,000 year old site, and in one case I saw the mortal enemies of a group gain possession of their opponents' grave goods because the other culture lost the war and this modern tribe's ancestors then took over the site - strange, that!).

And I would say that archaeologists and Native Americans would both agree that sacred sites should be protected and preserved, even though the archaeologists will go in and dig them up once the preservation battle has been lost through the government's exercise of imminent domain. Even in the legislation regarding archaeological resources it states that avoidance and preservation should be the first choice, if at all possible. But it is not a genuine sentiment as the archaeologists know that if a road or a new prison needs to be built, nothing will stop it and they will do the dig anyway.

What is the knowledge of artifacts? How does this help us?

Langdon Winner, a philosopher who writes about technology has said, "All artifacts have politics." I think this point can't be stressed enough. To choose to utilize a particular form of technology is to choose a particular form of social and political life. Take the technological adaptation of domestication. It completely changed those societies who 'chose' it. Instead of people meeting their daily needs of food, clothing and shelter by directly interacting with the natural environment as hunter-gatherers do, meeting these needs was now mediated by social relationships, for the first time giving one real power over another. The origins of social inequality and the origins of domestication are directly linked. Look at how things changed once the wheel or writing was invented. In recent times, the television, the automobile, the computer - these artifacts have profoundly changed society. The things are now in the saddle and they ride us.

Knowledge of how changes in material culture influence society adds another layer of understanding. Artifacts represent the physical remains of the processes by which cultures change. I remember the first time I read 'Industrial Society and Its Future'. I thought it was brilliant on this issue of how much technology influences

While I do see science is just another worldview among many, I also think it was somehow inevitable that it arose when it did. Up until only about the last 10,000 years distinct cultural groups could live in relative isolation. When cultures came in contact on the peripheries of territories there could be only a few outcomes. They could merge and incorporate various beliefs and customs taken from each, or they would remain apart, possibly warring, and while they might influence each other, especially in terms of changes in material culture and technology, belief systems regarding the origins and nature of humanity, the legitimacy of power, and proper social conduct, though, might remain markedly different, distinct.

We have come to a time now, unprecedented in human history, when almost everyone through mass media, TV and so on, (which has by now infiltrated even the most remote parts of the globe) knows of the existence of everyone else. We have faced the reality that there have been a myriad of worldviews held by the people in distinct geographical regions throughout time, and must now consider the implications of the fact that there is no 'one way' of doing or looking at things. Still, diverse peoples all over the globe are compelled to merge. This is a recent development coinciding with the rise of the scientific paradigm. Science's claims to objectivity act as a way for diverse peoples to interact with one another on a sort of common ground, using a common language, 'reason', the scientific method, to come to a agreement about some very fundamental things. There is now a new global culture, and the new global worldview is the scientific paradigm.

Science is taught pretty much the same in universities in Zaire, New Guinea, Guatemala, China, Saudi Arabia. It is a universal language accepted mostly as a result of its utility. You need to know engineering, chemistry and physics to build an oil refinery or nuclear bomb, biology to suppress known diseases, mathematics to run a complex economy, etc. The fact that any diversity still exists in terms of explanations of what human beings are, how the world came into existence is, I fear, to be short lived now. There are no viable alternatives being offered, except in the case of religious belief systems that are now centuries old and becoming more untenable to their proponents with each new generation.

Is the scientific worldview a good thing or a bad thing? I don't like the Christian worldview any better, I don't like the mechanistic attitude of science, and there is certainly no inherent ethics or morality to agree or disagree with in it, with the possible exception of this notion of 'progress' that assures that only the backward thinking will resist its charms, oppose its supposedly value neutral project. What science does have is an arrogant certainty of its superiority in providing explanations of reality, to be a final authority. I guess it deserves to be despised just on that basis. But I still remain confused in a way, I feel I must pick and choose which elements to incorporate into my own belief system now from all of the belief systems I have become familiar with. (Note: don't read the self-proclaimed 'intellectual anarchist' philosopher Feyerabend if this confusion is a real problem for you, too. I'll paraphrase his most intriguing assertion...There is only one response to any statement that has ever been made that is always 'true' - it is "That's what you think!")



"You're a terrorist? Thank God. I understand Meg to say you were a terrorist."

science, has limits on its dependability?

We are constantly coming up against the problem of trying to rationally argue against civilization (which I see as an outpour of 'Reason'). But, what we find from this archaeological data or connecting with wildness at any level is a way of life that is beyond the rational/irrational dichotomy.

Those who benefit from civilization also benefit from us having to play by their terms. It seems that there are points at which these kinds of 'rational' argument don't really cut it (not that there is either one or the other). Do you feel that there are certain limits to 'knowledge' or methods? Or that archaeology, as a

I see your point about the limits of rationality. Consider all of the evidence for widespread environmental destruction as a result of the project of civilization. The scientists can put 'the facts' out there proving we are basically on a course of planetary self-destruction. Describing the effects of global warming, air pollution, habitat destruction, nuclear waste toxicity, over-population, etc., provides 'rational' grounds for arguing for changing the cultural practices producing these effects. But rather than suggesting we rethink the project of civilization in light of its detrimental impacts on our relationship with the natural world and make fundamental changes that would really address these concerns, there is this false hope that more and more science and technology will be able 'fix' any problems science and technology have created. This illustrates the limits, and the arrogance, of the scientific paradigm. That even in the face of cogent arguments that civilization is the sickness, there exists a belief that in civilization also lies the cure. Is this rational or irrational?

Whether or not ideas are considered rational or irrational seems to have more to do with power than the logical consistency of the arguments offered in support of one position or another. Thriving in this system of oligarchy (rule of the few) that we do requires a pragmatic, Machiavellian strategem. Those in power will promote the science that serves their aims, and attack the science that would erode their power. It comes down to being less about the elusive, value-neutral and objective face of science in theory, than the actualities of science in practice in the hands of the powerful. The resistance is forced, in a way, to counter-attack on all fronts and one of these fronts is in the realm of science. I see my work as taking place on this battlefield.

capital, within the framework of its evolution. Even the movement toward unlimited generalization of desire is isomorphic to the indefinite movement of capital.

We are all slaves of capital. Liberation begins with the refusal to perceive oneself in terms of the categories of capital, namely as proletarian, as member of the new middle class, as capitalist, etc. Thus we also stop perceiving the other—in this movement toward liberation—in terms of those same categories. At this point the movement of recognition of human beings can begin. This is obviously only the beginning of the liberation movement, and is continually threatened with failure. Refusing to take this into account denies the power of capital. What has to be perceived is a dynamic. We are slaves; our goal is not to become masters, even without slaves, but to abolish the entire dialectic of master and slave.

by Jacques Camatte, 1973

Translated by Fredy Perlman and friends,
from Camatte's *This World We Must Leave* and *Other Essays*.
(Autonomedia, 1995)

What this means for the critique of symbolic culture

"Without living activity, the collection of objects which constitutes society's Capital would merely be a scattered heap of assorted artifacts with no life of their own, and the 'owners' of Capital would merely be a scattered assortment of uncommonly uncreative people (by training) who surround themselves with bits of paper in a vain attempt to resuscitate memories of past grandeur. The only 'power' of Capital resides in the daily activities of living people; this 'power' consists of the disposition of people to sell their daily activities in exchange for money, and to give up control over the products of their own activity and of the activity of earlier generations."

-Fredy Perlman, *The Reproduction of Daily Life*

What Camatte is showing in these selections is that capital, the essence of consumer worker-production societies, has become autonomous. This is saying that it is no longer a 'tool' or something that we just use to adjust the flow of our society; it is the value source for all other relations within our society.

Within the critique of symbolic culture, this is how all things work. You take a bad idea, work, and you magnify it as the basis for a society. You have an ideology that everything we are working to achieve is not just good, but the inevitable option. Progress, Development, Positivism, etc. This becomes an outlook that is pounded in our heads through all other aspects of symbolic culture (as is being shown in this issue, religion, History, spectacle, etc.). EVERYTHING THAT WE KNOW, WE KNOW IN THE CONTEXT OF SYMBOLIC CULTURE. And this is no accident or coincidence.

Our entire reality is the well planned dream world for some power hungry manipulators. None of these things just happen, and some small group of people actual feel that they benefit from this system based off of some stupid pieces of metal or paper.

I don't think I need to get into much detail about how insane this whole thing really is. Try looking at it from another perspective: we spend our lives chasing after this thing, this concept of money. We base our lives and relations around it, and everything we do is for this thing that we hate, but hey, that's just how things are right? Wrong. You see, that small group, those little control freaks who shape our world for us have everything to

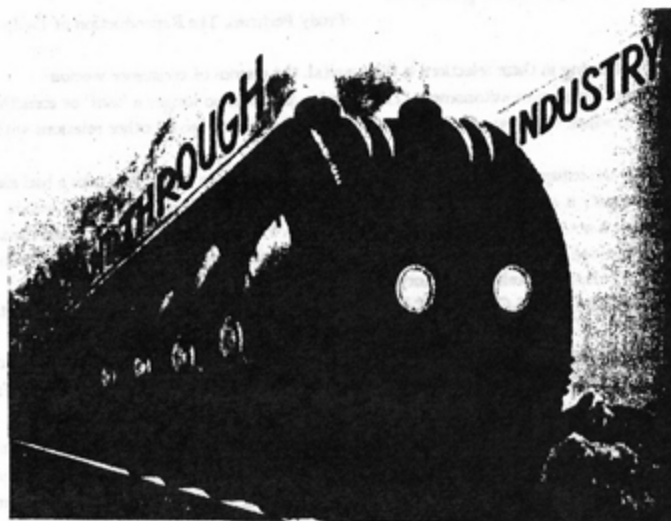
gain from our playing along in their little maze. The money and potential for some higher level of material comfort (luxury) is the cheese at the end of the maze, and we're the rats. It's all a little game, they wave the prize in front of our eyes and we'll claw each other apart just because we think that we can get some of it. You start that process out from birth, and who's surprised that by the time we're ready to work they don't have to pull our leashes for us anymore?

None of us want to work; no one wants to waste their lives away building up someone else's dream world, while we rot away. But what is it that keeps us from stopping, from getting together and trying to find a way of living that actually gives us some sort of depth and satisfaction? It's simple, and it's not just in front of your eyes, it's how we see the world. That perception is the fantasy of those who destroy the dreams before we even realize what they are.

What Camatte is showing in this section is that capital is just another piece of this thing that is put before us so some people could profit off of our domestication. And it's not even individuals that have control, but the ideologies that keep us looking forward down a dark path, have actually pushed this vision that is in free flow, it has become autonomous.

The entire sphere of symbolic culture is a vision that pushes us in a single direction and keeps us from ever really looking anywhere else. We follow along; we are, according to Camatte, "on the terrain of capital." What is shown here is that capital is just one piece of this entire totality of civilized thought: symbolic culture, and to paraphrase the above text:

We are all slaves of civilization. Liberation begins with the refusal to perceive oneself in terms of symbolic culture.... Thus we also stop perceiving the other—in this movement toward liberation—in terms of those same categories. At this point the movement of recognition of human beings can begin. What has to be perceived is a dynamic. We are slaves (domesticated, tamed); our goal is not to become masters (power wielders), even without slaves (technology, institutions, etc.), but to abolish the entire dialectic of master and slave (civilization).



By being stuck in this straight ahead mentality, searching for 'hard facts,' we downplay the social-cultural importance of myths, replaced with the documented history: the game of conquer and colonizers. Our view of the world has been twisted into one that doesn't allow for a cyclical understanding of self and being. It seems that anthropology and archaeology embody this movement, seeking a past that has been scientifically confirmed rather than one that has been passed on. For this reason we have seen numerous accounts of primitive peoples who have had to deal with cocky anthropologists and archaeologists who 'know the truth'. Is there some kind of middle ground to be reached between the two ways of being, or are there limits on either side?

The scientific paradigm, with roots all the way back to the Enlightenment, has been replacing all other worldviews in terms of its truth value since its inception. It is very difficult now to assert that the earth sits on a turtle's back, or that humans arose from dream time. Our civilization now finds the answers to the questions about the nature of existence in molecules and mathematical equations, in the biology, physics, chemistry, astronomy, mathematics, engineering and economics taught in institutions across the world.

Yet, I'm not convinced that traditional mythologies or oral histories are more resistant to ideological manipulation, and would assume that people always, if you were to ask them, used 'reason'. The cosmologies of the Mesopotamians or the Maya must have appeared 'reasonable' to adherents. And what is 'primitive' science? The first Iron Age metallurgy required an understanding of chemistry and physics, same with making pottery, astronomy is an ancient preoccupation, and the first domestication was essentially primitive applied biology, the earliest genetic manipulation of plants and animals. And just as some of us will resist harmful changes in society, in technology, in power relationships, today, I am sure there were those who resisted 'progress' throughout human history.

I think you touch on a very important point here. Science provides us with our modern creation myth in the form of DNA, the Big Bang, etc. - although most would argue that it is more than a myth, that our contemporary ideas about the world reflect reality more than at any other time. This is arrogant and stupid. I'm certain these explanations will not stand the test of time any better than the ones from a few hundred years ago, which we now see as ignorant and quaint. I love reading old books on sociology, psychology, biology, etc. It just demonstrates that our scientifically proven 'truths' will someday look as odd and out of step with reality as phrenology or the idea that women are the inferior sex. I can live with the fact that there is no ultimate truth out there to be discovered, only fluid interpretations of the realities we face at the moment, this need not prevent one from taking a stand.

And this is another important point illustrated by anthropology and archaeology - what does accepting the concept of cultural relativism really mean in terms of how one lives life? There have been, and still are, so many different perspectives on some of the most basic elements of living - on child rearing, on the relationships between the sexes, on the treatment of animals, and the legitimacy of authority throughout time. All we need to do is look at the differences of opinion between cultures, even between individuals within cultures, past and present on these matters and we see that worldviews are constantly changing - what appears to be a 'rational' belief at one point in time may appear ludicrous later. Even 'traditional' belief systems are evolved, certainly not static. What I am interested in is what are the catalysts for these changes and the results they have on our world.

Which traditional belief systems deserve a defense? According to the traditional belief system in the West a couple of hundred years ago, as a woman, I wouldn't even have been able to engage in this discussion with you. I would not have been able to receive an education and my philosophical musings would not have found an outlet. As a political science student I studied the history of political thought from Plato and Socrates, through Machiavelli, Hobbes and Locke, to the 'Founding Fathers'. Not a woman's voice among them until the late 19th century really in terms of what we learn at university. Does that mean that women in the West thought nothing of politics for the past two-thousand years? What changed, why can I now engage in this activity? In some 'traditional' cultures, women still can't...is this wrong? How can you argue that?

This illustrates an interesting dilemma. Is one time period's or one culture's belief system, tradition, mythology, worldview, weltanschauung, whatever you want to call it, better, truer, more rational or enlightened than another? What aspects of a tradition are bad and which are good, on what do you base such a value judgment when we are all captives of ideological manipulation from which there is no escape, no objective point of reference? Which features from my traditional culture do I choose to respect and which do I reject. I have no problem rejecting the Christian myths I was raised with, the central tenets seem ridiculous to me now. I read philosopher Bertrand Russell's and other's arguments against Christianity as a youth and promoted such ideas incessantly in arguments at the dinner table with my Catholic family. But I have a harder time deconstructing, for example, a Native American or Taoist traditions where I see proponents as having a right to believe the world is really quite a different place than science says it is (and I actually feel more sympathetic to major portions of those belief systems - a value judgment, where do I get my values?)

It's best to reject all universalizing tendencies and respect the diversity of opinion that exists, and therefore I guess I have to argue the same thing about the Catholics, that they have a right to stick to their traditional mythology even if it seems irrational, that science provides evidence they are wrong about a lot of things. But what harm is done if we don't contradict the central notions of a tradition that says, for example, women should obey men, or humans have dominion over all living things. Perhaps cultures are like individuals, no one is all good, or all bad. This is one of the other reasons that studying anthropology can be as confusing as it is enlightening. When it comes to making value judgments about the merits of cultural practices, traditions, myths, where is the point at which you start if there is no objective foundation for critique?

the catalysts for change are, looking at the appearance, significance and knock-on effects of watershed events (like the first agriculture, the invention of the wheel, writing, etc.). The 'why' question, e.g. why did hunting equipment change? Why did people start planting things? Why did they start constructing boats and traveling long distances? Are always much more a matter of debate - and much more interesting to pursue. We will never know for certain why, but hypothesizing, offering possible answers, even tentative ones, I feel, is crucial communicative action.

In Europe, where 'Post-Processual' (influenced by post-modernist theory) archaeology dominates there is a great reluctance to pursue the why questions. In my view they have essentially concluded it's all too complicated, of no real consequence, we can never know for sure, so they've just given up and do mostly descriptive work. European post-processual archaeology has also pushed more for understanding the limitations of archaeological research and acknowledged the subjective, political nature of the discipline, which is a good thing. But I've always argued against radical relativist tendencies in archaeology. I do believe there are some things we can conclude are indeed 'objective facts' based on archaeological research. They are simple, yet profound.

For one thing, we know beyond a shadow of a doubt that people managed to accomplish everything they needed to accomplish on a daily basis using only stone, bone, and plant tools for the majority of our existence. To me this is a most salient fact. It proves that everything we think we need to survive now beyond that is really unnecessary. This is not to say that life before civilization was a paradise free from care or worry, without physical hardships. But on the whole, I would argue that archaeology can prove that civilization has increased suffering, rather than decreasing it. And I bet if the trees or rivers or bears were asked, they would say that the world was a lot better place before civilization. Here is something, too, I wish to touch on. Anthropology and archaeology are very anthropocentric disciplines, even though we recognize humans as animals. It would be better if there was a confluence of anthropology, archaeology and ecology. It is wrong to separate the history of humans from the history of the rest of the living things in an ecosystem we occupy. It is important to understand the interplay between all living things. I try to address this in my work.

Most of my experience is on prehistoric sites in North America, mostly in the Appalachian region. And here is another basic fact I have no doubt about as a result of my own personal experience in archaeology. People lived here on the land for 14,000 years and left only the legacy of ephemeral hearth features, scatters of stone flakes and pottery sherds, and the occasional earth work. But what do I see on the same landscape now, after only a couple of hundred years of civilization? Dams, landfills, toxic waste dumps, nuclear power plants, cities like New York, river poisoned by acid mine drainage, clear cuts. The contrast is stark, real, unavoidable. Sure, people have always altered their environments, but the scale of the alteration of matter undertaken in modern civilization is absolutely unprecedented, what with concrete and plastic, steel and all the toxic effluent produced by their manufacture, the rate of the destruction has increased dramatically. It is there for all of us to see, you don't have to be an archaeologist.

Back to practicalities of the methodology. While there are several ways to approach archaeological research in terms of theory, the nuts and bolts of the practice of archaeology is pretty standard everywhere. Excavate and record - ideally everything. We dig with an eye to site patterning of course, in addition to the recovery of artifacts. The ideal is to be able to offer a story about what a site looked like and how the people functioned there when it was occupied. Where were the houses, what did they look like and what were they made of, where was the hearth, where did they throw the garbage, how and where did they manufacture the stone tools, where did they get the stone from, where did they make the pottery, where did they keep domesticated animals if they had them, where did they butcher the animals, what plants were they eating, did they bury the dead, where, with what?

All these things are investigated using scientific analytical techniques like radio carbon dating to determine the age of the site, chemical analysis of the soil to discern activity areas, pollen analysis to examine plant remains, lithic analysis to reveal stone tool reduction techniques and sources of raw materials. All of this is description, not very theoretical or controversial, merely presence or absence of material, laundry list archaeology. And this makes it the most popular specialty in archaeological research. It is the least intellectually demanding, all lab work, measuring and weighing rocks, etc. Most are content to do archaeology that has no theoretical content whatsoever, to spend 7 years as a post-grad writing an 80,000 word dissertation describing the assemblage of stone flakes from a lithic scatter at a single site, big research conclusion? They got their rocks from a local source (dub) and the flint knapper was right-handed not left-handed! Who fucking cares?

What ends up happening in practice, in the real world of archaeology, is usually less than ideal. We always have the developers breathing down our necks to finish the job quickly. Keeping 30 archaeologists in the field for a few months seems expensive to them, especially when they don't appreciate what it is exactly they are paying for. Corners get cut, information gets lost. For example, at the site I worked on in London the terms of the contract with the developer stipulated that we would only go after the Roman component of the site, so we dug out everything else on top of it (2 meters of Dark Ages - Medieval - Victorian stuff, 1600 years worth) with picks and shovels and chucked it on the dirt pile without really looking at it. And if there were any remains of London's indigenous people (Celts) below the Roman component, we didn't look for that either.

There seems to be a civilized overtone in regards to the treatment of 'prehistory' and primitive cultures. The civilized societies, upholding Reason and Science, carry over the Imperialism of 'Truth' and 'Objectivity' to justify their own destruction for the sake of 'Progress,' and a part of that is pushing the sanctity of linear time and thought. Things are to be taken literally, and in a strict order with strict purpose.



Evolutionary history in a heartbeat What symbols mean to the human-animal

As part of the anarcho-primitivist praxis, and our current understanding of how the roots of domestication took hold, we are reliant on a chronology of anthropological and archeological citations, of which there is plenty of oral tradition that is in obvious

conflict with this write-off of pre-history. The citations provide evidence for the totality of civilized life/death, or what is being called symbolic culture. The critique of Symbolic culture is based on the idea that symbolism and the use of symbols automatically separates its user/viewer from reality, that there is a misrepresentation of values and reality, the drift into alienation. With this unquestioned, or even completely refracted upon, it has become the backbone of our critique of civilization. The chronology that dispels the appearance of human speech and language is associated with the creative self-expression (art) found in the Lascaux caves and finds itself as the basis for the creation of time and numbers through writing. Yet, I cannot see a connection even if you were to accept the chronological evolutionary theory. Oral expression, language and creative, self-expressive activity (art) is slumped into the creation of symbolic culture because of their totalizing effectiveness today. It's important to question everything, especially with the totality of our death (non-living) culture. I think what we are trying to accomplish here is clarity, we need to define specifically the source of our alienation and estrangement while at the same time realizing who we are as human-animals. In order to do this we must look both into our ancestral past and ways of living before civilization and relate it to our ways of living (dying) that are apart of civilization. If we are to understand exactly what alienation is, what the use of symbols mean and have meant, a clearer understanding of the human-animal as we have always been is in dire need. This means relying not on data and facts but in the direct experience that accompanies how we use symbols, both from our own personal interactions and from those of our ancestors.

We must first come to an understanding of how evolution actually works in our world, and our particular evolution as a species. Our gathering and hunting ancestors bear a unique storyline for us to perceive the totality of today with, a directly experienced cosmology. Within the world of our ancestors there appears a basic rule of evolution and growth in the lifespan of the human-animal, as well as the individual lifespan. Firstly, we don't gain abilities that are not needed and beneficial to the human-animal, namely, the physical ability of oral, vocal sounds and of language. Everything that exists in this world is unique, and with this diversity of uniqueness comes diverse needs. We are living in a sensitive, contextual world and we develop responsibly according to our interactions. The physicality of any being is a part of that being, it has those unique characteristics for a reason, and we are in the same boat. With anything, we do things to fulfill needs; there are reasons for our development. We do not grow body parts, increase our brain capacity for learning, or gain the ability to use language just because; we do not have meaningless or insensitive characteristics. Nothing is meaningless, or senseless. So then we must ask, what is a symbol? Symbols are real and are a part of real processes consisting of

imagination, feelings and activity. They are not static and dead until they actually become static and dead, which is when they are separate from their original aliveness or their meaning becomes lost. The use of symbols is a form of communication; it is a form of communing with other people, animals, plants, and spirits. Symbols are not formless; they take on the form of their creator and user because they are a part of them, they were created and filled with purposeful meaning. When that meaning becomes obstructed or masked it loses its power, this is precisely at the point when symbolic culture can be created. Out of the death of the symbols original aliveness or the thwarting of its full potential it can be transformed into what it is not, cultured so to speak. Symbols are not to blame, symbolic culture is. Symbolic culture is the use of symbols to employ symbolic representation over an entire culture, of mixed cultures, of people who are not being represented individually or culturally. Which is civilization, imperialism and colonialism—the imposition of symbols/values on other people, places, beings and spirits. Symbols have value; they are given value by their user/creator, that value is then to be communicated. It's communicated in many diverse ways, for example how tribal tattoo marks communicate to other tribes specific cultural/individual values: the group animal, color, plant etc. Also, in the way human-animals give gifts, packed into every physically tangible part of that gift is its physical value, there is meaning beyond the physical gift, symbolic value. We are communicating specific meaning, and by doing this we are not communicating non-meaning, its not meaningless. If a symbol is self-representative, in other words being used by its creator, its meaning was given personally, it reflects a personality. It becomes oppressive/dominating when they are to you what you are not to them; there is a misrepresentation of values, they have become depersonalized. Symbols do not carry an inner logic of domination; depersonalization, alienation and domination come with symbolic culture. Language and creative, self-expressive activity (art) are merely communicators of symbolic value. How does language when used among people with the same cultural values, beliefs/perceptible reality, language, stories, memory, myth, home, community become an impediment to their reality? We cannot further limit our critique because of the limits we have been impressed with by the totality of civilized thought. Our ancestors used symbols; they spoke them, painted them on their bodies, carved them into their lives and memories. These are the same people we romantically reach out for a reconnection with; yet, we are ignoring part of our/their characteristics. We ignore their use of symbols, their oral traditions and symbolic tool use that helps rather than impedes their interaction, interpretation and continuation of the way of the world.

First we must question what has been put to the test, what are the ramifications of human-animals using language. We once were able to commune with the Great Mother, our language reflected its immediate momentum, we spoke the *living language* of our "mother" tongue. As part of this oral tradition, there is a respect and understanding of what it means to use language and the role it plays, it's nothing to be ashamed of. The ability to develop language as a response to culturally modified conditions (ability to speak vocally) doesn't naturally imply an inner logic of domestication/domination. The oral traditions of our ancestors came hand in hand with their personal/cultural story; it was a physical reflection of their wisdom and understanding of the land and its creatures while becoming a completely distinct culture. Language is the cultural specific use of the ability to speak vocal sounds; it is a form of human communication. In the context of domestication, language divorces us from our other natural body movements; we have restricted our bodies interaction and understanding of the land. We have been divorced of our other essential communicators, our Clan cousins the Bear and Crow, and Elders Cedar and Stone. With the use of writing, language became prioritized over other bodily movements. Language played its role in the domesticating process, just as having feet plays its role, yet writing is specifically what solidified movement/activity into a sedentary context rather than the ability to speak. Domestication created an immediate limitation on our movements and activities, the characteristics of the human-animal are outfitted to gather and hunt its food. The use of language orally does not supplant true meaning, it does not automatically apply an inner syntactical language to the rest of your perception because you CAN be speaking always in the moment. Writing does provide this inner language, it acts as a filtering process for our bodies. It filters into language the full range of our body movements; you enter into a restricted physical dimension of your imagination. It is with this base for ones interactions

archaeologists are now pushing the discipline to acknowledge the role our narratives play in society. Highlighting the role of the past, the politics of the past, in the present. I've always been at odds with archaeology over its lack of self-awareness, its reluctance to make our work relevant in the real world. It's funny, my fellow archaeologists see me as a radical green anarchist, someone who comes to do archaeology with an overtly political agenda, an outsider who has infiltrated the ivory tower, really. On the other side, because I study and work in the profession, my comrades the radicals will often see me as part of an academic establishment that defends the status quo, sort of an outsider here, too. I try to walk a fine line in order to bring these two camps together as I do see they can help each other, even if I get bashed from both sides.

Do you feel that anthropology and archaeology are objective processes? What is the real weight of the information that comes from these methodologies?

Archaeology is not an objective process at all. It seeks to objectify, but is thoroughly subjective. The kinds of answers we get depend on the kinds of questions we ask. For example, Marxist archaeologists in the former Soviet Union would incorporate a Marxist agenda into their archaeological research, i.e. look at the past in order to prove the communist theory of history was right. The dominant ideology in the US and Europe is capitalism and our archaeology helps in legitimizing and justifying it. For example, my academic advisor in the UK recently wrote an article criticizing one of the most well-known archaeologists in the world for allowing Shell Oil and Visa to be corporate sponsors of his dig in Turkey. Cambridge professor Ian Hodder's field archaeologists appeared in photos wearing baseball caps with the Visa logo on them, and Hodder was quoted as saying that 'obsidian was the first credit card', essentially suggesting that capitalism has a long history, was inevitable, a natural part of the human condition - this is horrible.

All archaeology has politics and sites themselves, the actual physical remains of the past, are often powerful cultural and political touchstones. Just think about the event that kicked off the most recent Intifada in Palestine. It was Sharon's visit to an archaeological site in Jerusalem. The Taliban blew up the ancient, giant Buddhas because those objects represented a non-Islamic past the regime felt threatened by. In England, the dissolution of the monasteries required that all the old cathedrals and the icons in them be physically destroyed so the church's political power could be deconstructed in favor of the power of the monarchy. Another example is the use of archaeological research in promoting nationalism. Nations justify their existence and national identities are created by uniting people using the idea of a shared history, culture, language, etc. In Nazi Germany the fascists sought to unite people using this idea of a superior culture and Mussolini did the same in claiming the superiority of Roman culture. The Zionist argument for the occupation of Palestine is largely based on an interpretation of the region's ancient history.

The concept of people's shared past is a powerful ideological tool, this idea of an 'us' (who are right) and 'them' (who are wrong). The construction of a national identity is complicated. Some major elements would be territorial history, language, religion, political and economic organization, even food preferences. What makes an American and American, or a Palestinian a Palestinian, what is the East, the West? Why do we even use these kinds of terms? Defining who is 'us' and who is 'them' has a lot to do with histories, this is important to understand.

The theoretical perspectives embraced by archaeologists in their research is constantly changing and differs in Europe and America. In addition to radical, Marxist, and feminist archaeology there are processual, post-processual, structuralism, post-structuralism, hermeneutics, evolutionary, behavioral, all different schools of thought that frame the archaeologist's research questions and interpretation of data. In the US, since the 1970's, the 'New' or 'Processual' Archaeology has dominated the field (Binford et al. J. Steward's cultural ecology). Archaeologists here tend to look at humans as just another mammal occupying a unique ecological niche. The human subject is studied much the same way you would study the evolution of the species of wolves or any other social mammal. In a way I think this is a good thing.

We have to keep in mind that we are animals after all. The object of the research is to understand human's adaptation to specific environments, and culture (economics, social organization, technology, etc.) is seen as a means of adaptation.

Archaeologists are like journalists, they ask who, what, where, when, why, how? The emphasis is on describing the 'processes' by which social organization and material culture (technology) change over time, what



No doubt archaeology has been and still is an establishment endeavor, and the work of most archaeologists will not challenge the sociopolitical status quo. This is one of the things I have been most critical of in my archaeological writing. Take the profession of CRM (Cultural Resources Management). CRM exists as a result of government legislation. In the early 80's a law was passed, falling under the Environmental Protection Act, that says before any construction project can be undertaken by a federal agency, e.g. Army Corps building dams, Department of Transportation building roads, or a federally regulated industry, e.g. utilities - gas pipelines are big business for archaeologists - the developer must prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS). Along with addressing the project's potential impact on natural resources, they must also address the impact on cultural 'resources', i.e. archaeological sites. So now battalions of archaeologists are sent out ahead of all these development projects to find, record, and often excavate the sites that will be destroyed by them. Obviously, archaeologists are agents of the empire, we facilitate the development projects, clear the way for the developers. We've been bought off, we work for them, our business comes before the bulldozers. For years I have argued that this state of affairs compromises our intellectual integrity.

Archaeologists could be very cogent critics of unsustainable development, John Zerzan does this quite effectively using archaeological evidence. We could argue that what we are seeing now in terms of the global expansion of civilization is ultimately harmful to humans and every other living thing on the planet. We know that, for example, the over-exploitation of resources surrounding human habitations, increasing complexity in material culture and technology, increasing social stratification, etc., are always a bad idea, socially and environmentally harmful. We study the rise and fall of civilizations, we understand some of the key features that bring about suffering, subjugation, environmental destruction, but archaeologists will not work such analysis into their reports. The archaeologists themselves will not contradict the aims of the developers, that would be biting the hand that feeds them. So most are content to do their digging and write superficial reports comprised mostly of laundry lists of the artifacts recovered without addressing this big picture.

Archaeology and anthropology are cross-over disciplines, existing as they do at the intersection of hard science and the humanities. Archaeology really wants to be a science, and as such will make (false) claims to objectivity. When the archaeologists describe the phenomenon of civilization, they are seeking to be merely descriptive, the theories are supposed to, like all scientific theories, appear value neutral. The archaeologists say they are writing about 'what was', not what 'ought to be'. Critical reflection is seen as political and not part of the scope of archaeological research in most circles. The exception is the kind of archaeology that I do, 'radical archaeology', a relatively recent development with connections to contemporary feminist and Marxist archaeological perspectives. The radical archaeologist deliberately chooses research questions that are designed to demonstrate, for example, the history of social inequality or the history of the subjugation of women. Of course, asking these questions of the archaeological data will result in making political observations and traditional archaeologists are critical of these trends, arguing that the radical archaeologists are not being objective, which is of course bullshit, since no archaeological research is.

It's funny though, after years of speaking about AP perspectives to my archaeological colleagues, most will agree with the fundamentals of the AP arguments. The problem seems to be that people feel powerless to change anything. They might agree completely with the analysis of civilization offered by someone like JZ, but when it comes to being able to do anything to change the trajectory of civilization they will say it is impossible. That even if the archaeologists were to become more politically involved and point out the dangers of civilization, no one really would listen to us anyway. We are just putting 'the facts' out there, it's not the archaeologist's place to make value judgments as to whether civilization is a good thing or a bad thing, just to describe its evolution. Obviously this is a cop out and makes archaeologists part of the problem rather than part of the solution.

I feel that an understanding of the past is an important tool for the activist. Studying anthropology and archaeology opens one's mind. It makes us realize that things have not always been the way they are now, and that there are other alternatives to civilization. It's not just abstract political theory, we know that people managed to live perfectly fine for thousands of years without cars, refrigerators, computers, telephones, etc. We can compare and contrast the overall costs and benefits of civilization the more we know about what life was like before and since. This knowledge does not require a degree, or even attending a class, people can seek this knowledge on their own. All you need is a passionate curiosity, a desire to understand the world you live in now and how it came to be this way.

When I went to work at the EFI J I was not at all surprised to find that among the editorial collective and the small circle of people around it, the majority of those who did have college degrees had degrees in anthropology. I tell myself now that teaching can be subversive. It has revolutionary potential. My students will read Species Treitor, Jerry Mander, John Zerzan, and other AP thought and more than you might think are open to these perspectives, they seriously consider what these authors are saying. I encourage students to think for themselves, to question authority (mine included), but to understand that there are lots of different ways to look at the world. The important thing is to look, not bury your head in the sand and let the business majors and the lawyers run the world, act on your own beliefs.

So yes, I do believe the study of the past, through archaeology, has the potential to enlighten and provoke thought, even action, and I insist this doesn't require an academic setting. It is the core idea of learning as much as one can about the world you live in that's important to promote. Of course students will have to wade through lots of bullshit and attitude in an academic setting, never trust the 'experts', think for yourself, study on your own if you don't want to do it in an institution, but it's just as important for revolutionaries to arm themselves with knowledge.

As far as what a revolutionary perspective has to offer archaeology, well, a sense of purpose. It could/should be so much more than elites satisfying the intellectual curiosity of other elites. Radical

with the world that when we started domesticating plants and animals we changed our way of living, we are active in ways not suited for the human-animal's characteristics. We forget that stories, myth, memory of events, place-reality and cultural values were possessed and passed down from generation to generation since we have been human-animals. These were created, put into memory and stored in the body to be passed down and taught to one another. The ability to speak and use language are merely communicators of this stored wisdom of living this life way. We need to set aside the idea that because of an ability we possess as being human-specific does not make it unnatural; language is merely what we decide together on how to give our voice to the land because that is where we are inspired from. It is the essence of our lives; the air we breathe is just as much a part of the sound that comes out of our mouths. Our lives are not performed in language; rather, language is a physical description of the physical/spiritual world we inhabit. A peoples language is their cosmic vibration, it's their own personal story weaved into the dreamtime of the spiritual world. The problem with civilization is that our lives are restricted to the use of language and speaking over other forms of communication: we have thus a lack of direct communication, which we are limited by the inherent limits of language. Its not language's fault we aren't communicating enough with each other, its the context that we are in that limits and prioritizes the use of language over other forms of communication. For example, touch of the hand, touch of the foot, touch of the lips, touch of the head, hand-sign language, all of our personal body movements carry meaning—the realization of these meaningful body movements we display on a daily basis has been shattered. We lack a holistic motivation towards viewing our physical/spiritual selves as being holistically creative bodies, with each movement being a developed, feeling response and action to the world we live in and the people, animals, plants, air, water and earth we are in contact with. If you want the world to hear you differently, you have to change the way you speak to it.

We need to now look at what is truly symbolic culture: writing, numbers and time. Each presents to us an abstraction of reality, a misrepresentation of quality and realness. Reality that has been separated from our daily interactions is subject to quantification which means someone else is control of your perceptible reality, yet, its quality can only be experienced. Writing, like time and numbers quantify what cannot be quantified—the day is not equal to 24 hours, 1,440 minutes and 86,400 seconds. The day is the life cycle of the sun and moon, it awakes at dawn and lies to rest at dusk—it is ageless, it lasts a lifetime. Language is quantified by writing, we are now communicating with numbers the meaning of language. Art is a creative, self-expressive activity similar to tool use. Today we have two distinct arenas for being naturally creative, one is our daily interaction and the other is the arena specified for pure creative activity. Once we separate the symbolic from its original meaning, it can then be subject to quantification, its communicable capabilities are severely mauled. We draw, paint and sculpt secluded from the basis of our creativity, the world. Quantification results in the loss of symbolic value and meaning. Creative, self-expressive activity leads in the re-creation of what is valuable, it's giving yourself and others value, and it's the spread of this value. Can you see the enormous difference in value and meaning from the secluded artist activity, and the red okra dye that adorns the body of earth-based people singing and dancing into the night air? The difference is that one person is fully a part of the moment and their activity expresses that, whilst the other person has become separate from the process and the circle has been severed. Art, while separated from the immediacy of the present is subject to quantification; art has an expiration date called now. Its intent has been changed from communion filled with symbolic value, to communication of quantified information. It becomes separate from the whole process of living and



becomes an end in itself. Maybe we should dump the word Art; let's use creative, self-expressive activity instead, or be more specific about what creative activity is all about (which is what I've been using all along). It's about communion, it has value and meaning, it seeks to contribute a certain effect with this value and meaning, it has intent. It was never some hogwash ideological trap; art for art's sake is the product of domestication and seclusion. Creative, self-expressive activity (art) is supported by our own energy, energy filled with feelings, thoughts and value. Its power lies in its reproduction and communion of this energy back into the community of life and death. It becomes art for art's sake literally when it leaves the cycle that would normally communicate this energy and value to the whole community. Art is thus symbolic mis-representation, creative activity is not. Language is a creative activity, we will continue to be creators of speech, physical creations that contain symbolic value and meaning. It is culturally created, defined and used. The problem with civilization is that we are not creating or defining what we are using. There is value in everything we speak of, and we must have what we say mean something to each Other. We are giving gifts, our selves, but our selves are becoming lost within this non-representative system, it's not a community. For example, inking the body with creative designs called tattooing is created with meaning and value, it has an intent or principle. It's a form of communicating visually what you value, what value you place and where, emphasizing particular body parts for specific meaning. It communicates who and what you are in the world. Today it follows ideologically with art, except its pain for pain's sake. How much can I suffer? What we salvage from this type of art is what we know people have to offer, we know what has meaning and value to it, and it's why earth-based peoples artwork is so highly valued. They have lost their community to recycle this energy, so they are giving it other communities of people only to realize today that the people seeing it in museums, at art galleries, on television are not a part of communities. The people of our culture do not understand its value and through these mediums it is rendered valueless, yet, it becomes quantified and receives a similar value monetarily (numerically) and in age (time). A drift back into the qualitative, truthfully apparent world we live in is a decisive negation towards numbers and time. When I say quantification, I am referring to the abstract concept of numbers, mathematics and the equative structure of the world. Our world is built upon the domination of Others, our own repressed feelings and the abstraction and quantification of reality.

Language, today, is oppressive in a culture based on domination/domestication—everything is anchored to it. Language, like other body movements/activities requires a release of energy. This release of energy is another determining factor on its effect, similar to the amount of pressure you place on your lover's lips; they have different meaning and different effects. The spoken word is subject to many pressures and releases of energy. Plants, animals, rock, wind, water, do not respond to the cultural limitations of the words we are using. Rather, they are effected/affected by pressure and the release of energy, as well as by the intent or principle, which carry their own effect/affect. Whatever voice you are speaking of reflects its original relationship, as English reflects its assimilation and conquering of other civilizations all over the world. The base for my conclusions is on the realization that domestication has the value of domination, that human-animals have specific characteristics that have developed since our existence for a way of living based on gathering and hunting. Whether our principle for its use was to be long-term or not, its burden has remained. Domestication limits our contact with other peoples; it imposes boundaries and borders that are not physical to the human-animal but physical to the abortion cycle of our farming. We are making sure that it is unable to reproduce itself in its own manner. Conflict is constant, which is what we call war. We are constantly enforcing rules for a domain on beings and places that have their own ways of living, within the community of life/death. The human-animal fits into the community of life/death, hunting its food and gathering wild edibles. Our bodies, minds and spirits are prepared for this type of relationship. We are what we are. Each body part has certain functions. If we fail to use every part of our selves we are not acting very wild at all. Our wildness is determined by our abilities, the use of all our abilities. Just like the wolf is considered a wolf because it behaves like one, it relents nothing of its characteristics, if it were, it would not be considered a wolf. We are in this position; we are refusing to use what we have in front of us. Domestication limits our interactions, which is a limitation on our selves. We are limiting

foods they ate, the languages their parents spoke, the ways they celebrated holidays, etc. And when I began studying I was living with an Algerian and surrounded by Arab culture. I began realizing that all my views were a product of the distinct temporal and geographical cultural manifestation I was raised in and it gave me a new perspective. Essentially I discovered the concept of cultural relativism and began wondering if there were any universalisms in terms of human experience, and since that is a big aspect of the subject matter of anthropology, I think I was drawn to it.

Can you describe the divisions within the two fields in regards to the implications of work done? Can you give a bit of a historical look at the splits?

In the US, archaeology is taught as one of four sub-disciplines of anthropology, the others are physical anthropology (study of human evolution), cultural anthropology (study of living cultures), and linguistics (study of languages). In the UK these are all taught separately. I see anthropology and archaeology as having the same subject matter, the study of humanity in all of its diversity, throughout all of its history, across the world.

Archaeology is popularly defined by an activity, digging. The focus is on the recovery of objects and analyzing what they tell us about the lifestyles of the people who used them. In this sense you could argue that technically, anthropologists study living cultures, archaeologists study cultures of the past through the remains those cultures left behind. But they both approach the subject matter in the same way, by objectifying the subject, speaking of 'cultures' in terms of categorical constructions, i.e. economics, politics, social organization, subsistence strategies, technology, etc. Both anthropologists and archaeologists will look at these same basic elements and attempt to describe the cultures they are studying, past or present.

Anthropology seems to me to be sort of an exotic sociology, and its relevance is diminishing at this point in time. Of course, the discipline's origin is recent, late 19th century, and it's directly associated with the Age of Empire when the Europeans first encountered and wrote about the 'customs of the natives'. Interesting though, one could argue that 'primitive' anthropology goes all the way back to the Greeks and Romans who wrote about the strange customs of those they encountered while expanding their early empires. Even if they were considered to be travel journals, their descriptions of the other anticipate anthropological literature.

In the US, the first anthropologists had the Native Americans as captive (literally) subjects and here is where the field really came into its own. The major audience for the anthropologist's work and their major financial supporters would be the US government, the Bureau of Indian Affairs and their work would be used to find the best ways to subjugate this population. Interestingly, the early anthropologists often lamented the loss of cultural diversity caused by the march of civilization and would write quite sympathetically about their subjects, those noble savages living wild and free in Eden. Still, they really did nothing to interfere with the cultural genocide they were witnessing. The same goes for the famous early European anthropologists like Lévi-Strauss and Malinowski working in the colonies of Africa, Asia, and Oceania.

Archaeology has a little different history. Even today when I tell people I am an archaeologist they usually ask me 'Where do you dig, Egypt? Rome? Greece?' Early on classical archaeology focused on investigating the major civilizations. Many people still think all archaeology is the investigations of big, sexy ruins like pyramids, hunting for the 'treasures' of gold and silver, rediscovering the art of the ancients. In the beginning, archaeology was a big treasure hunt undertaken by private, wealthy, self-proclaimed antiquities scholars and was more akin to art history than anthropology even. The earliest museums were these 'cabinets of curiosities' where Stone Age axes would be displayed next to elephant tusks and shrunken heads. Of course, we have to realize that people have always encountered the artifacts of the past, always lived around ruins, tombs, found the odd arrowhead they didn't recognize and probably had their own explanations of who made them, when, and why. The first systematic digs came much later, one of the earliest I have come across in the US is a brief report written by Thomas Jefferson who 'excavated' a Native American burial mound on his property in Virginia in the late 1700's.

I would say that it was the widespread acceptance of evolutionary theory that sent archaeology on a different trajectory. Once it was accepted that humans had evolved from primate ancestors, the quest for the chronology of events was on. At that point, humans became just another animal whose evolution could be understood by scientific research, and artifacts would be seen as the fossil record of past cultures. From then on the story of humanity would be told by the physical anthropologists and the archaeologists.

The implications of the hegemony of the scientific paradigm and the role of the archaeologist as the teller of the story of humanity looms large. There is no such thing as the archaeological record there to be deciphered like some kind of text, a definitive history of the species. It is all a matter of interpretation. The archaeologists tell stories about the past, the kinds of questions we ask and the kinds of answers we get are all influenced by culture in the present. This is one of the things the anarcho-primitivist perspective on prehistory illustrates so well. Take the same basic 'facts' of human evolution and some will conclude we live in the best possible world, some will conclude we live in the worst.

Archaeology and anthropology have naturally grown from the civilization that we are working to destroy. It has been a part of the sciences, and like other fields, has been used to justify the exploitation and destruction on behalf of expanding empires. The fields still produce a gross amount of information pointing towards the 'short, nasty, brutish' look at 'the state of nature.' Do you feel that a field with such a history is capable of validly producing an alternative? Or perhaps, as with any other civilized tool, the fields produce what the 'scientist' wants them to?

ARTIFACTS AND ANARCHY: THE IMPLICATIONS OF PRE-HISTORY

An Interview with Anarcho-Primitivist Archaeologist, Theresa Kintz



In the last issue of Species Traitor, we opened up some questions about the role and importance of anthropology and archaeology to a critique that opposes the scientific worldview that backs civilization. Ironically, the same field that originated to justify the subordination of 'primitives' has been turned on its head over the last few decades and only recently contributed to a critique of civilization.

Theresa Kintz has been run through the archaeologist mill. Since the mid 80's she has been working in the field as a digger coming from an 'eco-anarchist' perspective and gaining acknowledgment from other archaeologists through her radical archaeologist publication *The Underground*. In 1994 she became a long-term editor at the *Earth First! Journal* where her editorial in support of the Vail arson (the first major ELF Mt in the U.S.) generated more mail than anything ever appearing in the *EFJ* including hate mail from Julie Butterfly. While at the *EFJ* she conducted the first interview with Ted Kaczynski (published jointly by *Anarchy: a Journal of Desire Armed* #44 and *Green Anarchist* No. 57-58) and pled the notorious mayor of Eugene, Oregon, Jim Torrey. Theresa has been extremely active with international green anarchist publications, wrote the introduction for John Zerzan's latest anthology, *Running on Emptiness: the Pathology of Civilization*, and is currently finishing up her dissertation on 'Radical Archaeology and the De(con)struction of Civilization'.

She agreed to respond to some of the questions that we hope to explore more in Species Traitor. Her view is unique as a dissident archaeologist, facing scrutiny from fellow anarchists and archaeologists, and her responses here are more than welcomed to this debate.

How did you become involved with anthropology and archaeology?

Academically speaking, by chance. Like most people, when I arrived at university I didn't know what anthropology was. After reading the course offerings I signed up for two anthropology classes and they turned out to be my favorites, along with my philosophy classes. (I think anthropology is the new philosophy in terms of its subject matter and the social role it now plays i.e. anthropology and archaeology seek answers to those grand questions about the nature of human experience). I remember the first day of my first anthropology class. The professor asked all of us to write down a definition of the word 'primitive'. She collected and read them aloud and we had a fascinating discussion about what the word meant. I guess ever since I have basically been trying to define the primitive and define civilization, and compare and contrast the two. I do this now in all the classes I teach, to clarify what we are discussing when we call something 'primitive'.

My own working definition of the word 'primitive' would be primary, relating to an earliest stage or state; original, first, the thing (whatever the subject you are modifying by the term 'primitive') in its earliest incarnation. That way it is an almost infinite regression that necessitates addressing the biography of the object, descriptive shorthand used to extract the complex history of a thing. When speaking of primitive peoples, what the anthropologists and archaeologists have meant are peoples whose lifestyles most closely resemble the lifestyles of those hunter gatherers arbitrarily assigned the designation of 'first humans'. There are also primitive boats, primitive alphabets, primitive weapons, primitive computers...of course the term needs clarification since what deserves the designation 'the first' is always going to be debatable. But I don't see the term primitive as being pejorative, primitive does not necessarily mean simple, less complex, crude or naïve. I see the use of the term primitive as an invitation to explore and discuss history.

Professionally speaking, I became an archaeologist for the most practical of reasons, I was offered a job. It was in the early days of CRM (Cultural Resources Management) and I began working in the field for a local archaeological firm just before I finished my BA. I loved the work itself - spending my days working outside, engaging in hard physical labor with a small group of people with a shared sense of purpose, the way I think humans are supposed to live. The combination of intellectual stimulation and physical exertion makes archaeology a very satisfying daily preoccupation. If one has to work, being a shovel burn is as good as it gets, I think. Over the past sixteen years I've worked on well-over one hundred sites, in 14 different states and three countries. The average dig lasts around six weeks (the longest was 7 months, some jobs would take only 2 or 3 days), so for years I lived as a nomad. The sites themselves are usually in very remote rural areas, often in forested, mountainous terrain; less often in urban areas colonized early in US history.

The archaeologist observes much about the world we live in. The essential focus understands the history of the relationship between the land and the people, trying to figure out what has happened for the last 20,000 years or so wherever we are. Because of my work as an archaeologist I have come to understand something about the chain of events that have taken us from the Stone Age to the Space Age. Now when I look at a landscape I see the history of the place, the evolution of architectural styles, the comings and goings of industries, the rise and fall of political powers, changes in technology, the fads of society, etc.

As far as why I might have found the subject matter of anthropology so interesting...I suppose that's more complicated. In hindsight I would say it was an ever present, intense curiosity about the world I live in and about 'the other'. I had been around people from 'other' cultures a lot growing up in AZ. I remember going to the homes of my Native and Hispanic friends and being fascinated by how different their lives were, the kinds of

our use of senses, our instincts, body movements and ourselves. Domestication of plants and animals is a burden on their freedom, a burden on our freedom. We should focus not on language or creative self-expression but the physical/spiritual limitations that have severed our relationships. Our focus should be our relations to the quantifiable world of writing, numbers and time. Writing is a quantification of thoughts, feelings and value. Numbers are a quantification of things, reification. Time is the quantification of the life span of everything. It traps us into the jaws of death, because guess what happens when time stops? Life is no more, now connect that to every waking moment of your "short" life and we have become separated from the great cycle that we do not control completely. It's

essentially turning feelings, value, beings, places and moments into objects. An object is not all encompassing; it is tethered by having someone objectify it, or itself being considered outside the realm of subjection—wild or not domesticated. Since we are talking about symbols, we should bring to light a symbol that anti-civ, anarcho-primitivist and green anarchist circles agree with: tools. Tools are a direct use of symbols; they are full of symbolic value, intent and purpose. What makes a totem pole any different than an atlatl or bow and arrow? Different only in use, each is symbolic for personal interaction within the community of life/death. Tools like symbols have value; they are given value and communicate specific value. The bow and arrow are specific to their user, in the same way a mask shaped like a buffalo's head is putting forth a specific value culturally placed on the buffalo and then individually placing value in its creation, use and effect. Language is a tool for communication, for interaction. It's effective in the desire for a returned response of communication. Art is a physical (material) tool like the bow and arrow, except it works communicably like language. Its purpose is communication rather than hunting. We need to get back to this way of living, we need to make communicable, passionate and strong body movements, and we need to believe we are apart of this world. It's the only world we have.

We will keep in a post-civilized world, only what we need, what allows freedom to assert itself in its quest for balance. Essentially what is useful in being apart of the community of life and death, as human animals that hunt and



gather their food. It is towards this goal that we must strive for, towards a wild existence as human-animals. This doesn't mean we are going to be able to not contradict ourselves, we are still battling off the leviathan and its cumulative wounds. Our context includes the interaction of other wild animals, plants and the rest of the world. We were once wild and free, we were animals in the context that we have developed and grown in as hunter-gatherers for our entire existence. Language we will use it only when needed, it will be limited to human interactions and if our interactions are already not based in a human context it will have its uses, as it once did. Reductions in each form of communication and self-expression need to be made. Art and language right now are our only means of communicating, so we, for obvious reasons, stress their use. We need to fall back into our dream world. The more you interact with the non-human world, the less you speak. We need to stress our values; they are what keeps us together. We need to pick up where we

left off: we still have a world to live in, plants still know how to plant themselves in the soil, animals still know how to run wild, letting their feet touch the soil beneath. I believe that human animals have a place in this world; we are sensitive to this world. Our bodies carry the receptacles for continuing our interactions with the rest of the world; in contact we feel what it feels. Symbols don't have to replace the real world to accompany it. Our ancestors used symbols and did not have symbolic culture. I believe that I am a human animal capable of living how our ancestors have lived their entire existence, gathering and hunting their food, dancing, singing and playing with rest of the natural world. We are all naturally against domination, civilization and symbolic culture. We are just still puzzled as to who we really are and I think this type of dialogue needs to continue. What we are learning we need to hold onto, implement it into our daily lives because it's the activity of ourselves that will help us recreate the wild response of our ancestors. Where do we learn from? We need to learn from people who have impressed into their lives the old ways of our earth-based ancestors, we need to learn inside the context of a wild community, in which our wild response will be welcomed. We need to make room for possibilities. We need to skip primitivism, we don't need to go through every stage of ideology formulation to realize that the basis for our lives is not abstract at all. Primitivism like Anarchism must be realized, it requires actually making those changes in your relationships, it is much more than the "possibility" of being revolutionary. There isn't a primitive, or first way of living, there never was. The way of the world has always continued, we merely have left the circle. Now, to become part of the circle again is what we must do. We can dance until the rain comes pouring down, we can stalk and hunt those in power and with every fleeting moment we can just be, no regrets.

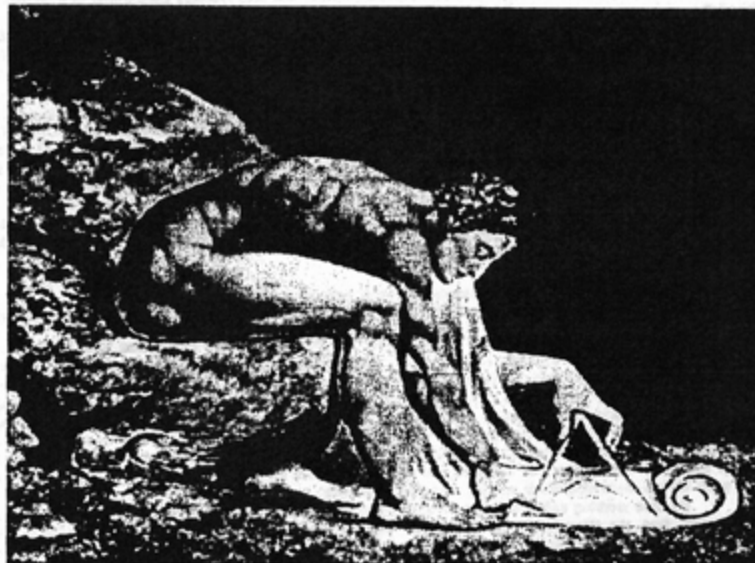
I am a human-animal. I am an empowered spirit. I am in what Chellis Glendinning calls the recovery period, and each connection is another step towards becoming whole. I believe if we can figure out who we are and where we want to be it will be that much easier to take the initiative and start dismantling this system. We need to know exactly who and what our enemy is as well as knowing and having something to defend, with this as the basis for our activity there is nothing that will stop us.

Towards a post-civilized muteness
By an anonymous human-animal



There must be a conscious turn against the symbolic and civilization, and I think it has already begun. Antipathy to these dimensions, in fact, is always present, has been present all along, and now it's growing as the generalized crisis deepens.

A "dependency relationship" does obtain, in my opinion, or it could just as easily be called "being held hostage." We will all have to unlearn our domestication, and the radical break with domestication in society will most likely occur, I'd say, when it becomes clear that civilization is more of a liability than an asset. When personal immiseration and ecological devastation, for example, reach a certain level and at the same time a viable alternative can be seen as more pleasurable, safe, reasonable.



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John's books are available from the above address or the CAC distro.
For more of John's work, check out: <http://www.blackandgreen.org/jz.html>

dominate animals and plants (domestication) brings civilization rather swiftly, in relative terms. And the nascent elites that are spawned by increasing division of labor provided a stepping stone to that definitive turn which is domestication.

In your eyes, how does the scientific studies/research associated with anthropology and archaeology weigh compared to what we know now, from ourselves or from the remaining tribes/bands at various levels of civilized existence?

I agree with those who say that consulting our own lives is more to the point, more potent than considering the anthropological/archaeological literature. But I think it's also valid to consider evidence from the past that demonstrates an actual state of "natural anarchy" that obtained for such a very long time. Such a picture is an inspiration to me, the realization of the prevalence of non-hierarchical life-ways that constituted the only successful, sustainable adaptation to the world that our species has known. Our vision, our critique of civilization is not dependent on such a picture or record, but can draw strength from it.

Most of us are significantly further removed from undomesticated existence than any surviving indigenous people. Thus it is important to green anarchy types like myself to learn from them and support their struggles.

How would you know where something like language took shape? Do you think that the move from language and art necessarily brings us to agriculture or is there some middle point of mediation in which we are still embodied by the 'other' (wildness)?

No one knows when language originated. (Speech, that is; we can date written language because of artifactual evidence.) It is one of the most interesting mysteries of all, I'd say. There really are only guesses, with some saying it is rather recent (e.g. emerging in the Upper Paleolithic, say, contemporaneously with the earliest cave paintings of about 35,000 years ago) and others figuring that human speech more likely began on the order of a million years back.

If language and art appear more or less together fairly recently virtually on the eve of agriculture then a strong link to domestication is suggested. And obviously if there's a very long time span between their origins, then only art would seem to be linked to domestication.

But it seems quite plausible to me that there is a connection - again, at least, in terms of art and agriculture. They are pretty closely related in time, after all.

If speech really is very old - and we may never know - then maybe the "middle point of mediation" is that period after speech but before art. That long period when division of labor did not advance and symbolic culture as we know it did not exist.

How do you see the future of civilization and where can a critique of symbolic thought take us?

Technological civilization is realizing the elimination of the natural world and ever new depths of individual and social estrangement. It is consuming, impoverishing and destroying its host planet, as everyone can see. It has no future.

A critique of symbolic thought reveals how this malignant virus originated and therefore to what lengths we'll likely have to go to avoid replicating civilization after it falls.

Do you feel that there could be a conscious turn against symbolism and/or civilization? Or do you feel that the totality of civilization has created a dependency relationship that the domesticated will hold strongly to? Do you see anarchy as being brought about by the domesticated or by those who have turned against their domestication revolting against the agents of civilization?

FATAL FLAW

To walk upon the Earth is to walk upon the graves of our ancestors.

We would believe that this is a thing of disrespect:
desecration.

This could not be further from the truth.

The Civilized human has forgotten the greatest part of
him or herself.

When we think of necessary functions; brain, lungs, and hearts come to mind,

but short of that we are apparently nothing.

Of course, there are always the oxygen and carbon dioxide conversions,

But the scientists have left them off as just that,

conversions : equations.

We are simply chemistry: fruits of Reason.

To deny the forests as our lungs,

The rivers as our veins,

The air as our hearts,

And the wildness as our
brains:

Is to deny our true selves.

The Civilized human walks as a shadow of the real human.

The domesticate is really the half dead,
for s/he has denied the majority of their own body is theirs.

Instead they grant the miracle of life to the synthetic
self.

We have already become cyborgs.

We think of Technology as our Iron Lung,
 Industrialism as our veins,
 Progress as our hearts,
 and Capital as our
 brains:
 the Spirit of Reason has engulfed our being.

We, having denied our being, put our faith in the Future,
 a Technological-Industrial Utopia:
 the half dead awaiting life.

We forgot that life is a cycle,
 life is now and it ends for all of us.

Our decayed corpses will flourish life for generations well
 beyond our imagination.

This is one thing we know for sure,
 yet we continually hold out.
 We deny life, and thus deny death.

Our legacy will only end in sorrow,
 the void of corpses looking no more satisfied in death as
 in life.

Those who neglected the problem before their eyes:

THE IRON LUNG HAS CANCER.

-Kevin Tucker



Beyond Symbolic Thought

A Brief Interview with John Zerzan

It seems no other anarchist has shown as much interest in the concept of symbolic thought as John Zerzan. For the past decades, John has devoted his work to a thorough critique of the totality of civilization, from symbolic thought to the day to day misery of this way of life and into the failures of the left. His essays on the origins of civilization have been collected in Elements of Refusal, Future Primitive, and most recently in Running on Emptiness: the Failure of Symbolic Thought (see reviews). He edited Against Civilization, and is co-editor of Questioning Technology.



How would you distinguish symbolic culture and symbolic thought, and what is their relation to civilization?

What followed after the species began to symbolize constitutes symbolic culture. This ethos has come to define what thinking is, and the sensual part of experience has so greatly given way to symbolic experience; that is, direct experience is being reduced toward a zero point.

This narrowed and engineered cultural mode is directly related to civilization, which is the product of continuing control viz. domestication.

Symbolic culture in the forms of art and religion, for example, involve re-presented reality being thus processed as substitute for direct experience. They emerge as societies begin to develop inequalities that express themselves in specialized roles and realms of separate authority.

The symbolic may be seen as itself a technology, in that it works upon reality as a force for domination. A similar perspective is Horkheimer and Adorno's "instrumental reason," meaning that civilization comes to infuse or deform rationality itself into patterns of the logic of control.

Freud saw that civilization is that condition necessary for work and culture to triumph; namely, the forcible renunciation of instinctual freedom and eros. Understood in this sense, it becomes easier to grasp the inner connection between symbolic culture and civilization.

How far back should we be looking with a critique of civilization and why? What is the significance of tracing back so far?

I don't think it's possible to plumb the depths or origins of civilization without critically examining division of labor or specialization. In the effective power of specialists – possibly the shaman as first case in point – lies the beginnings of inequality in human society. An institution this basic has, of course, been largely overlooked. How can one possibly have modern life without division of labor? But certainly this is just what we are putting into question! Modernity is now seen as increasingly untenable and we are led to wonder at the roots of the extremity of "advanced" society. What propels this trajectory?

Division of labor leads to mass production, even in ancient times, and this requires coordination and justification. Chiefs, bosses, priests flow from this. And the at-first gradual and unnoticed and then rapid development of specialization lays the groundwork for domestication, civilization's defining basis.

Control/containment takes its next step with private property, but surely the will to